[illegible]

nabe Riche Ge: ar-
tleman ..

Malui me diuitem esse quam vocari.

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To the right courteous Gentlewomen, bothe of Englande and Irelande, Barnabe Riche wisheth all thynges thei should haue appertainyng to their honour, estimation, and all other their honest delightes.

GEntlewomen (I am sure there are many) but esperially of suche as best knowe me) that will not alittle wonder to see suche alteration in me, that hauyng spent my yonger daies in the warres emongest men, and vowed my self onely vnto Mars: Should now in my riper yeres, desire to liue in peace emongst women, and to consecrate my self wholie vnto Venus. But yet the wiser sorte can verie well consider, that the older wee waxe, the riper our wit, and the longer wee liue, the better wee can conceiue of thinges, appertainyng to our owne profites, though harebrained youth ouerhaled me for a tyme, that I knewe not bale from blisse: Yet wisedome now hath warned me, that I well knowe Cheese from Chalke, I see now it is lesse painfull to followe a Fiddle in a Gentlewo-

mans chamber: then to marche after a Drumme in the feeld. And more ſounde ſleapyng vnder a Silken Canapie, cloaſe by a freend, then vnder a Buſhe in the open feelde, within a mile of our foe. And nothyng ſo daungerous, to be wounded with the luryng looke of our beloued Miſtreſſe: as with the crewell ſhott of our hatefull enemie, the one poſſeſt with a pitifull hart, to helpe where ſhe hath hurte: the other with a deadly hate, to kill where thei might ſaue.

Experience now hath taught me, that to be of Mars his crewe, there is nothyng but paine, trauaill, tormoill, diſquiet, colde, honger, thirſte, penurie, badde lodging, worſe fare, vnquiet ſleape, with a nomber of other calamities, that haps I knowe not how. And when a Souldiour hath thus ſerued in many a bloudie broile, a flap with a Foxe taile, ſhall be his beſte reward: for I ſee no better recompence, that any of them can gett. Now contrarie to bee of Venus bande, there is pleaſure, ſporte, ioye, ſolace, mirthe, peace, quiete reſte, daintie fare, with a thouſande other delites, ſuche as I can not rehearſe. And a man hauyng ſerued but a reaſonable tyme, maie ſometymes take a taſte at his Miſtreſſe lippes, for

his

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his better recompence.

But now (Gentlewomen) as I haue vowed my self to be at your dispositions, so I knowe not how to frame my self to your contentations, whē I consider, with how many commendable qualities, he ought to be endued, that should be welcomed into your blessed companies: I finde in my self no one maner of exercise, that might giue me the least hope to winne your good likinges.

As first for Dauncyng, although I like the Measures verie well, yet I could neuer treade them a right, nor to vse measure in any thyng that I went about, although I desire to performe all thynges, by line and by leauell, what so euer I tooke in hande.

Our Galliardes are so curious, that thei are not for my daunsyng, for thei are so full of trickes and turnes, that he whiche hath no more but the plaine Sinquepace, is no better accoumpted of then a very bungler, and for my part, thei might assone teache me to make a Capricornus, as a Capre in the right kinde that it should be.

For a Ieigge my heeles are too heauie: And these braules are so busie, that I loue not to beate my braines about them.

A Round is too giddie a daunce for my diet, for let the dauacers runne aboute with as muche ſpeede as thei maie: yet are thei neuer a whit the nier to the ende of their courſe, vnleſſe with often tournyng, thei happe to catche a fall. And ſo thei ende the daunce with ſhame, that was begunne but in ſporte.

Theſe Hornepipes I haue hated from my verie youth: and I know there are many other that loues them as euill as J.

Thus you maie perceiue that there is no daunce, but either J like not of them, or thei like not of me, ſo that J can daunce neither.

There reſteth then, if J could plaie of any Inſtrumente, or that J had any ſight in Songe, whereby J might delight your daintie Eares, (Gentlewomen) by ſweete playyng or faignyng ſome pretie Ditties. But to the firſte, my fingers would neuer be brought in frame: For the ſecond my mouthe is ſo vnpleaſaunt, either to ſyng, or to faigne, as would rather breede your loathyng, then your liking.

VVhy, yet if J could diſcourſe pleaſauntlie, to driue awaie the tyme, with amourous deuiſes, or that my conceipte would ſerue me, either to propone

propone pretie questions, or to giue readie aunsweres: with a nomber of other delightes, to long to be rehearsed, there were some comfort, that I might be allowed of emongst you. But my capacitie is so grosse, my wittes be so blunt, and all my other sences are so dull: that I am sure you would sooner condemne me for a Dunce, then confirme me for a Disciple, fit to whisper a tale in a Gencle womans eare.

But yet I truste (Gentlewomen) when you shall perceiue the zeale, that I beare to my newe profession: although you will not presently admit me to the Pulpitte, yet you will not denaie me, to bee one of your Parishe. Where if it please you, but to place me in the bodie of the Churche, you shall finde my deuotion as muche, as he that kneles next the Chauncell doore.

And here (Gentlewomen) the better to manifest, the farther regarde of my duetie: I haue presented you with a fewe rough heawen Histories. Yet I dare vndertake so warely polished, that there is nothyng let slipp, that might breede offence to your modest mindes.

I haue made bolde, to publishe them vnder your sauecundites, and I trust it shall nothyng

at all offende you. My laste requeſt is, that at your pleaſures you will peruſe theim, and with your fauours you will defende them, whiche if I maie perceiue, not to bee miſliked of emongeſt you, my encouragement will bee ſuche, that I truſt within a verie ſhort ſpace, you ſhall ſee me growe from a yong Punie, to a ſufficient Scholer. And thus (Gentlewomen) wiſhyng to you all, what your ſelues doe beſte like of, I humblie take my leaue.

Yours in the waie of honeſtie, Barnabe Riche.

To the noble Souldiours bothe of Englande and Irelande. Barnabe Riche wisheth as to hym self.

THere is an old Prouerbe (Noble Soldiours) and thus it followeth: It is better to be happie thē wise, but what it is to bee happie, how should I Discipher, who neuer in my life, could yet attaine to any happe at all that was good, and yet I haue had Souldiours lucke, and speede as well as the reste of my profession. And with Wisedome I will not meddle, I neuer knewe where it grewe, but this I dare boldly affirme (& the experience of the present tyme doeth make daiely proofe) that Witte standes by in a threedbare coate, where folly somtymes sittes in a Veluet goune: And how often is it seen, that Vice shall bee aduaunced, where Vertue is little or naught at all regarded, small deserte shall highly bee preferred, where well doyng shall goe vnrewarded, and flatterie shall bee welcomed for a gueste of great accompt, where plaine Tom tell truth, shall be thruste out of doores by the shoulders: and to speake a plaine truthe in deede, doe ye not see, Pipers, Parisites, Fidlers, Dauncers, Plaiers, Iesters, and such others, better esteemed and made of, and greater beneuolence vsed towarde them, then to any others that indeuours them selues to the moste commendable qualities.

Then seing the abuse of this present age is suche, that follies are better esteemed then matters of greater waight. I

haue stepte on to the Stage emongest the reste, contented to plaie a parte, and haue gathered together this small volume of Histories, all treatyng (sir reuerence of you) of Loue.

I remember that in my last booke, intituled the Alarum to Englande, I promised to take in hande some other thyng, but beleeue me, it was not this that I meant, for I pretended then to haue followed on, and where I ended with the decaie of Marciall discipline, so I meant to haue begun againe with the Disciplines of Warre, and withall to haue set forthe the orders of sondrie Battailles, and the maner of Skirmiges, with many plattes of fortification: but especially those of the lowe Countries, as Defte, Delftes Hauen, Roterdame, Leiden, the Breille, bothe the hedde and the Toune Gorcoum, Gouldfluce, Maaslandefluce, the Crimpe, with diuers others worthie the perusyng, for suche as haue not seen them. But I se the tyme serues not for any suche thing, to be accõpted of. And therefore to fit the tyme the better, I haue put forthe these louyng Histories, the whiche I did write in Irelande, at a vacant tyme, before the commyng ouer of Iames Fitz Morice: and it pleased me the better to doe it, onely to keepe my self from Idlenesse, and yet thei saie, it were better to be Idle, then ill occupied. But I truste I shall please Gentlewomen, and that is all the gaine that I looke for. And herein I doe but followe the course of the worlde. For many now adaies goe aboute, by as greate deuise as maie bee, how thei might become women themselues. How many Gentlemen shall you se at this present daie, that I dare vndertake, in the wearyng of their apparell, in the settyng of their Ruffes, and the freeslyng of their haire, are more newe fangled and foolishe, then any Curtisan of Venice.

And I beseeche you (Gentlemen) giue me leaue to tell you a tale, that comes euen now to my mynde: The matter

is not worthe the hearyng, but yet verie straunge vnto me at the first.

It was my fortune at my laste beyng at London, to walke through the Strande towardes Westminster, where I met one came ridyng towardes me, on a Foote clothe Nagge, apparailed in a Frenche Ruffe, a Frenche Cloake, a Frenche Hose, and in his hande a greate Fanne of Feathers, bearyng thē vp (verie womanly) against the side of his face: & for that I had neuer seen any man weare them before that daie I began to thinke it vnpossible, that there might a man bee founde so foolishe, as to make hymself a scorne to the worlde, to weare so womanishe a toye. But rather thought it had bin some shameless woman, that had disguised her self like a man, in our Hose, and our Cloakes: for our Dublettes, Gounes, Cappes, and Hattes thei had got long agoe.

But by this tyme he was come some thyng nire me, and I might see he had a Beard, whereby I was assured that he should haue been a manne, whereat I beganne to muse with my self, whether his simplicitie were more to bee pitied, or his follie more to bee laughed at. For in myne opinion, it is as fonde a sight to see a manne with suche a bable in his hand, as to see a woman ride through the streate with a Launce in hers.

And as he passed by me, I sawe three followyng that wer his men, and taking the hindermoste by the arme, I asked hym what Gentlewoman his Maister was: but the fellowe not vnderstādyng my meanyng, told me his maisters name, and so departed.

I beganne then to muse with my self, to what ende that Fanne of Feathers serued, for it could not be to defende the Sunne from the burnyng of his beautie, for it was in the beginnyng of Februarie, when the heate of the Sunne maie bee

very well indured.

Now if it were to defende the winde, or the coldnesse of the aire, me thinke a Frenche hoode had been a great deale better, for that had been bothe Gentlewoman like, and beyng close pinde doune aboute his eares, would haue kept his head a greate deale warmer. And then a Frenche hoode on his head, a Frenche Ruffe about his necke, a Frenche Cloake on his backe, and a paire of Frenche Hose on his legges had been right. A la mode de Fraunce: and this had been somethyng sutable to his witte.

But I thinke he did it rather to please Gentlewomen, and the better to shewe what honour he bare them, would weare one of the greatest vanities that long to their sexe. And to this ende (Gentlemen) I haue tolde you my tale, that you might perceiue the sundrie meanes we vse, and all to please women. I see it is the pathe that all desires to pace, and sure I would wish my frendes to tread the same trace. For what is he that is wise, whiche desires to be a Souldiour: Mars his Court, is full of bale. Venus is full of blisse. And my good companions and fellowe Souldiours, if you will followe mine aduise, laie aside your weapons, hang vp your Armours by the walles, and learne an other while (for your better aduauncementes) to Pipe, to Fiddle, to Sing, to Daunce, to lye, to forge, to flatter, to cary tales, to set Ruffe, or to dooe any thyng that your appetites best serues vnto, and that is better fittyng for the tyme. This is the onely meane that is best for a man to bryng hymself in credite: Otherwise I knowe not whiche waies a man might bende hym self, either to get gaine or good reporte.

For first the Militarie profession, by meanes whereof men were aduaunced to the greatest renewne, is now become of so slender estimation, that there is no accompt neither made

made of it, nor any that ſhall profeſſe it.

To become a Courtier, there is as little gaines to be gotten, for Liberalitie, who was wont to be a principall Officer, as well in the Court as in the Countrey, by whoſe meanes well doyng could neuer goe vnrewarded. Is tourned Iacke out of office, and others appoincted to haue the cuſtodie of hym to holde hym ſhorte, that he range no more abroad, ſo that no man can ſpeake with hym. And thei ſaie, the poore Gentleman, is ſo fleeſt from tyme to tyme, by thoſe that bee his keepers, that he hath nothyng to giue that is good, but it falles to their ſhares.

To become a ſtudient in the Lawe, there are ſuche a nomber of theim alreadie, that me thinkes it is not poſſible, that one of them ſhould honeſtlie thriue by an other. And ſome will ſaie, that one Lawyer, and one Goſhauke, were enough in one Shire. But of my conſcience, there are more Lawyers in ſome one Shire in Englande, with Attourneis, Solicitours or as thei are termed, brokers of cauſes, or Pettie foggers: then there are Goſhaukes in all Norwaie.

To become a Marchaunt, traffique is ſo dead, by meanes of theſe foraine broiles, that vnleſſe a man would be a theef to his Countrie, to ſteale out prohibeted wares, there were ſmall gaines to be gotten.

To become a Farmer, landes be ſo racked at ſuche a rate, that a manne ſhould but toile all the daies of his life, to paie his Landlordes rent.

But what occupntion or handie craft, might a man then followe to make hymſelf riche: when euery Science dependes vpon new fangled faſhions. For he that to daie is accompted for the fineſt woorkeman, within one Monethe, ſome newe founde felloiwe comes out with ſome newe found faſhion: and then he beares the priſe, and the firſte accompted for a bun-

gler. And within an other moneth after, the seconde shalbe serued with thesame sauce: and thus there is no Artificer that can holde his credite long.

Suche is the miserable condition of this our present tyme, this is the course of the worlde, but especiallie here in Englande. Where there is no manne thought to bee wise, but he that is wealthie: where no man is thought to speake a truth, but suche as can lie, flatter, and dissemble. Where there is no aduise allowed for good, but suche as tendeth more for gaine then for glorie And what pinchyng for a penie, that should be spent in our Countries defence? How prodigall for a poũd to be spent vpon vanities and idle deuises? What small recõpence to Souldiours, that fightes with foes for their Countreis quiet? How liberall to Lawyers, that settes freendes at defiaunce, and disquietes a whole Commonwealthe? What faunyng vppon hym whom Fortune doeth aduaunce? What frounyng on hym whom she hath brought lowe? What little care of the poore, and suche as be in want? What feastyng of the riche, and suche as be wealthie? What sumptuous houses built by men of meane estate? What little hospitalitie kepte from high and lowe degree.

And here I can not but speake of the bountie of that noble Gentleman, sir Christofer Hatton, my verie good Maister and vpholder, who hauyng builded an house in Northhampton Shire, called by the name of Holdenby: Whiche house for the brauerie of the buildynges, for the statelinesse of the chãbers, for the riche furniture of the Lodginges, for the conueighance of the offices, and for all other necessaries appertenent to a Pallas of pleasure: Is thought by those that haue iudgement, to be incomparable, and to haue no fellowe in Englande, that is out of her Maiesties handes, and although this house is not yet fully finished, and is but a newe

erection,

erection, yet it differeth farre from the workes that are vſed now a daies in many places. I meane where the houſes are builte with a greate nomber of Chimneis, and yet thei ſmoke comes forthe but at one onely tunnell. This houſe is not builte on that maner, for as it hath ſondrie Chimneis, ſo thei caſt forthe ſeuerall ſmokes: and ſuche worthie port, and daily hoſpitalitie kepte, that although the owner hymſelf vſeth not to come there once in twoo yeres, yet I dare vndertake, there is daiely prouiſion to bee founde conuenient, to entertaine any noble man with his whole traine, that ſhould happe to call in of a ſodaine. And how many gentlemen and ſtrangers, that comes but to ſee the houſe, are there daiely welcomed, feaſted, and well lodged. From whence ſhould he come be he riche, be he poore, that ſhould not there be entertained, if it pleaſe hym to call in. To be ſhort, Holdenby giueth daiely releef to ſuche as bee in want, for the ſpace of ſixe or ſeuen miles compaſſe.

Peraduenture thoſe that be enuious, will thinke this tale nothyng appertinent to the matter, that I was in hand with all, but I truſt my offence is the leſſe, conſidtring I haue ſpoken but a truthe: and doe wiſhe that euery other man were able to ſaie as muche for his maiſter, and ſo an ende.

And now where I lefte of I was tellyng, what Pride, what Coueteouſneſſe, what Whoredome, what Glottonie, what Blaſphemie, what Riot, what Exceſſe, what Dronkenneſſe, what Swearyng, what Briberie, what Extortiō, what Vſurie, what Oppreſſion, what Deceipte, what Forgerie, what Vice in generall, is daiely entertained, and practized in Englande. And although it hath pleaſed God by wonderfull ſignes and miracles, to forewarne vs of his wrathe, and call vs to repentaunce, yet you ſee the worlde runneth forewardes, and keepeth his wonted courſe, without any remorſe

of

of conscience, neither making signe, nor proffer to amende. But like as we see an old sore beyng once ouer run, will not be cured with any moderate medicine, but must be eaten with corosiues till he comes to the quicke: and like as we saie, one poison muste bee a meane to expell an other. So what should wee otherwise thinke of our selues, but if wee bee growne to suche extreamitie, as no gentill admonicion will serue to reclaime vs: what other thyng should we looke for, but a mischief to be the Medicine: God will not suffer that vice shall alwaies florishe, he will surely roote it out at the laste. And how long hath he already borne with vs in our wickednesse? And what reformacion is there had emongest vs? Vnlesse it bee to goe from euill to worse. But if wee did duely consider, how mercifully he hath still dealt with vs, how fauourably he hath preserued vs? And how wonderfully he hath defended vs? I thinke wee should not bee (altogether) so vnthankefull, as we shewe our selues to bee. For who knoweth not what an eye sore, this little Ile of Englande, hath been to the whole worlde, and how long haue wee liued (as it were) in contempt of suche Countries, as bee our nexte neighbours: who still enueighyng our quiet and happie gouernment: haue practized by as many deuises as thei could, to bring vs into their owne predicament, had it not been the onely Prouidence of GOD that preserued vs. Or what freendship might we yet hope to finde at any of their handes: if their oportunitie would serue them, to be reuenged of the dispite, whiche long agoe thei had conceiued against vs. First, the Frenche hath euer been our enemies by Nature. The Scottes by custome. The Spanyardes for Religion. The Duche although we haue stoode them in greate stede, and holpe them at many a pinche: yet I could buye as muche freendshipp as thei doe all owe vs, for a Barrell of Englishe Beere. If we should goe any further, then we

come

come to the Pope, the Turke, and the Deuill, and what frēd ship the beare vs, I thinke euery one can imagine.

And here wee might consider, how wonderfully GOD hath wrought in our behalfes, and with all humbleneſſe of harte, giue hym daielie thankes, for his benefites beſtowed vpon vs, but moſte of all, and eſpecially, for our moſte gracious and Soueraigne Ladie Queene Elizabeth, who from tyme to tyme he hath ſo mightily preſerued, to be the verie inſtrument of his mercie, and louyng kindneſſe towardes vs: and for whoſe ſake (no doubt) he hath forborne vs in his diſpleaſure, as many times he did the children of Iſraell, at the requeſt of his ſeruaunt Moiſes.

Firſt, how was ſhe aſſaulted in her ſiſters tyme, by thoſe rauenyng Wolues, that daiely ſought her death: For thei all ſtoode in doubt, that ſhe ſhould be that Iudith, whiche ſhould cut of proude Holofernes his hedde. And it pleaſed God to bryng it euen ſo to paſſe: not onely defendyng her from their crueltie and rage, but raiſed her vp (in deede) to their vtter ſubuerſion of thoſe bloodie Butchers, and to the greate comfort of vs all that were in bondage, and ſubiecte to tyrannie. Not onely ſettyng vs free, from thoſe deteſtable enormities, that ſo coroſiue our conſciences, but made open waie and paſſage for the Woorde of GOD, freely to bee publiſhed (I thinke) to our owne deſtruction, that ſo vnworthely receiue it. Vpon this, how many mightie enemies proteſted againſte her, and what harme haue any of them been able to doe her. And how many treaſons, and priuie cunſpiracies (ſith that tyme) hath been practiſed by our peltyng Papiſtes againſte her. But God hath reuealed, and brought them to light.

Let vs therefore praie vnto God, that he would ſo lengthen her daies, that we might ſtill enioye ſo gracious a Princes, long to gouerne and raigne ouer vs. And that frō tyme

to tyme, he would so direct her Noble Counsaill, in all their meetynges and consultations, as maie redounde to his glorie, to the benefite of their Countrie, and to their owne immortall fame.

Let vs likewise praie, that GOD would roote suche couetous hartes out of Englande, that for the sparyng of a penie for the present tyme: care not to let slippe suche matter, as maie coste many a pounde here after this.

Now lastly, and as Mariners vse to sing at the Sea, God saue my Mate and me also: and GOD sende all Souldiours that hath honestly serued their Countrey, better consideration then of long tyme thei haue had.

And thus Noble Souldiours and Gentlemen all, I haue helde you with a long Sermon, neither can I tell how my preachyng will bee allowed of: I craue no more, but wishe you all better Fortune, then I knowe the present tyme will affordeyou, and so will reste at your disposition.

Barnabe Riche.

¶ To the Readers in generall.

I Assure thee (gentle Reader) when I first tooke in hand to write these discourses, I meant nothyng lesse then to put them in print, but write them at the request of some of my dearest freendes, sometymes for their disport, to serue their priuate vse. And now againe by greate importunitie, I am forced to sende them all to the printer. The Histories (altogether) are eight in nõber, whereof, the first, the seconde, the fift, the seuenth and eight, are tales that are but forged onely for delight, neither credible to be beleued, nor hurtfull to bee perused. The third, the fowerth, and the sixt: are Italian Histories, written likewise for pleasure by Maister L. B. And here gentle Reader, I must instauntly intreate thee, that if thou findest any wordes or termes seemyng more vndecente, then peraduenture thou wilte like of: thinke that I haue set them doune, as more appropriate to expresse the matter thei intreate of, then either for want of iudgemente, or good maners. Trustyng that as I haue written them in Jeste, so thou wilt reade them but to make thy self merie. I wisbe thei might as well please thee in the readyng, as thei displease me in putting them forthe. I bid thee hartely farewell.

Barnabe Riche.

W. I. Gentelman, in *praise of the Author.*

WHo seekes by Ladie Fame to reape renoune,
Must aske consent of worthie vertues grace:
To her belonges the staulement of the croune,
She yeeldes all those their iuste deserued place.
As tread her pathe and runne her royall race:
Suche Riche rewardes to eche, she yeeldes eche where,
As might become this worthie Riche to weare.

The painfull man that Tilles his ground, reapes frute,
Eche merite hath his meede, paine hath his hire:
Desert requires that Fame should not stande mute,
Where Wisedome doeth to Vertues waies aspire.
The hope of gaine doeth ser mens hartes on fire,
Then yeeld hym thankes, that erst hath vndertooke,
For thy delight to penne this little booke.

Let Momus mates chat on, in their dispight,
Let wranglers wreake and wrest the worst thei maie:
The wisest sorte will iudge and take delight,
Though ianglyng Iayes that knowe not what thei saie:
Will oftentymes their witlesse wittes bewraie,
Yet Riche shall reape, what he right hath wonne,
Deserued praise for that which e here is doen.

Finis q VV. J. Gent.

Baptiſte Starre in praiſe of the Auct hour.

IF due deſert ſhould reape reward,
or worthie merite, guerdon haue:
VVhy ſhould not Riche preſſe forthe hymſelf,
thy louely Laurell croune to craue.
VVhoſe life in feeld that wonne hym praiſe,
he leades at home in Pallas waies.

Skorne not then Zoilus his good happe,
that can his will ſubdue and tame,
But trie to tread his pathe whereby,
thou maieſt thy life with vertue frame.
Allowe his paine, and penne to wright,
who naught pretendes but thy delight.

Loe he who wonted was in feeld,
to meete his furious foe in face:
Hath ſcalde Parnaſſus hill where he,
attendes Mineru' her noble grace.
And there his penne doeth plaie his parte,
as did els where his ſheeld and darte.

Finis B.S.

The Printer to the Reader.

THE fragrant Roſe can make no choiſe,
who ſhall vpon hym light:
The ſpraulyng Spider tournes to gaule,
the Bee to Honie right.

So fares it with this booke, whoſe leaues
are open ſpread to thee:
Make choiſe good Reader of the beſt,
ſucke Honie with the Bee.

Miconſter not eche meric phraſe,
deeme not the worſt of it:
VVhiche is not pende to doe thee hurte:
but recreate thy wit.

And for ſuche faultes as ſcaped are,
the preſſe, whereof thers ſtore:
Reproue the Printer for his haſte,
blame not the booke therefore.

But as by mirthe tis meant to moue,
thy mynde to ſome delight:
Reward his paine with praiſe, whiche did
theſe pleaſaunt Stories wright.

Finis.

The

Sappho Duke of Mantona,

The Argument of the first Historie.

¶ Sappho, Duke of Mantona *hauyng long tyme serued* Claudius *the Emperour, by whose magnanimitie, and Marciall prowesse, sondrie victories were achiued against the Turke, was by false imposition banished, hymselfe,* Messilina *his wife,* Aurelianus *his Soonne, with* Philene *his Daughter, in whiche banishement thei sustained sondrie conflictes of Fortune, but in the ende, restored againe to their former estate and dignitie.*

THE one of the greatest vertues that worldly men can expresse in the common behauieur of this life, is neither to waxe proude by prosperitie, nor to fall into dispaire by aduersitie: for Fortune hauyng a free will to come and goe, when, and where she listeth. The Wiseman ought not to bee sorie when he looseth her, nor to reioyce when he holdeth her, for that the valiant man looseth no reputatiõ, when that Fortune faileth hym, but is the lesse esteemed of, if he want discretion to beare her mutabilities, the whiche for the moste parte is altogether vncertaine, now promisyng good, now performyng ill, now liftyng vp to the tip of the highest dignitie, now throwyng doune to the pit of perpetuall infamie: now aduauncyng aloft those that be vnworthie, now throwing doune the climmers vp into extreme aduersitie: suche are the giftes and graces of fortune, to haue no better thing more certain in them, then to be for the moste part in all thinges vncertaine, as the sequell of this Historie shall more better describe, and followeth in this maner.

There was sometymes remainyng in the Courte of the

Emperour,

Emperor Claudius, a noble Duke whose name was Sappho Duke of Mantona, who as well, through his owne magnanimitie and valiaunce, as otherwise through his greate policie and experience in Marciall affaires, had atchiued many notable victories, in the behalfe of the Emperour against the Turke, whiche made hym bothe famous to the worlde, and feared of his enemies, but moste entirely beloued of the Emperour Claudius: But the Warres beyng once finished and brought to an ende, so that the Empire remained in tranquilitie and peace: Souldiors were forgotten, Captaines were not cared for, such as had profered themselues to fight for the safetie of their Countrie, were now shaken of, and suche were preferred in their romes, as had any facultie in them tēding to pleasure and delight, as Dauncers, Pipers, Fidlers, Minstriles, Singers, Parisites, Flatterers, Iesters, Rimers, Talebearers, Newes cariers, Loue makers, suche as can deuise to please women, with newe fangles, straunge fashions, by praisyng of their beauties, when sometymes it is scarce worthie, by commendyng of their manifolde vertues, when God knowes they haue fewe or none at all. But see I praie you how farre my wittes beginne to square, I pretended but to penne certaine pleasant discourses, for the onely pleasure of Gentlewomen, and euen at the very first entry, I am faine frō a reasonable tale to acrailyng rage, as it maie seeme. But I pray you Gentilwomen beare with my weakenesse, and as the Preacher in the Pulpit, when he is out of his Text, will saie for excuse: Good people, though this bee somethyng degressyng from my matter, yet it maie very well serue at this present: Take this I praie you for my excuse in like case.

And now to my purpose where I left of before, this noble Duke Sappho, had no skill in Courting trade: his hed which had been accustomed to beare ẏ̀ loftie Helme, had now quite forgotten to weare the waueryng Plumes, ready to blow awrie with euery winde. His bodie moste ineured to weare a coate of steele, could not be brought in fashiō with this queine and nice araie. His necke he thought more fitly to paise the truftie Targe, then to be hanged with Gemmes or Chaines

of

of gold: his fingers commonly practised to graspe the sword or Launce, could not be brought in frame to strike the Virginall or Lute: his voyce serued him better to cheare his Souldiers in the field, then either to faine or sing ditties in a ladies Chamber: His tongue had more vsed to speake simplie and plaine, then to dissemble with his freend, or to flatter with his foe: His legges had better skill to march after dubbe a dubbe a dubbe, then to mince it with a Minion, tracyng a Pauion or Galliarde vppon the Rushes: what should I saie farther, this noble Duke had no maner of skill in Carpet trade: But thus it fel out that Parasites and Flatterers, hauing once entered credite with the Emperour (as surely it is almost a common infirmitie, aswell amongst Princes, as other superiour Officers, to bee seduced by Flatterers, Pickthankes, and Talebearers) this noble Emperour likewise, by the instigation of suche as were about hym, who perceiuyng the Duke to bee none of their flatteryng fraternitie, and enueighing the great reputation wherein the Emperour helde hym, had so incensed the Emperour against hym, that now his likyng was conuerted into loathyng, and his greate loue tourned to a more hate, that in the end the poore Duke was brought to answere vnto many forged articles surmised against hym, who neither in consideration of his former seruice dooen for his Countrie, neither in respect of the innocencie of his cause, could otherwise bee dispensed withall, then to be banished into exile, hym self, Messilina his wife, Aurelianus his soonne, with Phylene his daughter: And although the common sorte of people held hym in greate honour, and muche lamented his case, yet it could not bee holpen, but the Emperous decree openly pronounced, must needes take place.

I beseech you Gentlewomen, yet to comfort your selues, I knowe your gentle hartes, can not endure to heare of suche vngentle partes, but these are but the frumpes of ordinarie Fortune, not priuate to Duke Sappho alone, but common to al men that be of the like profession, for what happened better to the moste noble Captaines of the worlde, or what other recompence receiued either Cæsar, Scipio, Haniball, or many o-

ther like, who hauing honoured their Countries, with sondrie triumphes, and many notable Victories, when the Warres were ended, and that there was no more need of them, finished their daies in suche pitifull plight, as I will keepe to my self, because right courteous Gentlewomen, I rather desire to drawe you into delightes, then to drowne you in dumphes, by reuealyng of suche vnnaturall factes, as I know your gentle Natures is not able to digest.

Thus you haue heard how this noble Duke, with his wife and children, by sentence from the Emperour, were banished from out their natiue Countrie, as also from any other Realmes, Cities, Townes, or territories, beyng within the Emperours Dominions. There resteth now for the Duke to make such poore prouision for his furnishyng, as his habilitie might any waies serue hym, the whiche GOD knoweth, fell out so meane and skante, as it scarcely seruethhym to defraie his charges, to carrie hym from out those places, from whence he was prohibited: and takyng his course towardes the partes of Macedonia, after a long and wearie iourney, he arriued at a Towne called Tariffa, where beeyng lodged in a meane and simple house, his money now being at the last cast, wherewith to beare his charges, his poore Wife and children altogether wearied, with their long and troublesome trauaile, and hym self all ashamed to be knowne what he was. Now it fell out, that the Hoste of the house many tymes vewyng, and castyng his eyes vpon the Duchesse of Messilina, who notwithstãding she dissembled her estate and degree, cõtented to leaue her honourable dignitie, and to perticipate such equall fortune with her housbande and children, as their hard happes had conducted them vnto, yet her beautie (whiche could not be blemished with meane and homely garmentes) had so entaungled her arrant Hoste, that he could not be merie when he was out of her sweete sight, and now though he perceiued his gheest beganne to ware slacke in his paiment, and not able to dis burse for his ordinarie expences, yet for the loue he bare to his wife, he was contented to chalke vp the charges behinde the doore, hoping in the end to haue cleared the skores to his better content, and

as

as time and conuenience might serue him, he spared not to let the Duchesse vnderstande his great liking towardes her, assuryng her, that the courtesie that he vsed towardes her housbande, was onely for her sake, and that if he were assured his good will might bee acceptable in her sight, she might assure her self of suche a freend of him, as would be as carefull of her as her housbande, to whom she was maried.

This Ladie now hauyng well pondered the woordes of her amourous Hoste, who would not thinke but that she was muche perplexed in her mynd, that she who had been borne of honourable Parentage, espoused to a noble Duke, whose dignitie in tymes past, surmounted all the rest, whose trainyng vp had euer bẽn amongst those of the highest degrée, and now that her honourable estate, was not onely eclipsed by crooked Destinie, but also to haue her Chastitie assailed, by suche a simple coilterell, whom she durst not so sharpely shake of, as her harte would very well haue serued, for that she knewe the Duke her housbande was runne in his debt, neither could she tel by what meanes he was able to discharge it, she was therfore constrained with faire speeches, to shift him of from tmye to tyme, the whiche the knaue perceiuing very well, beganne to thinke with hymself, that it was but her housbandes presence, that hindered hym of his purpose, and therefore determined to finde a present remedie.

And now commyng to his gheſt, beganne to recken with hym, and to call hym to accoumpt for the charges wherein he was behinde, tellyng hym, that at that very instaunt, he had occasion to occupie money, which made him not onely to seek vp suche small sommes as were due vnto hym, but also to trie his freendes otherwise to serue his tourne, and that helpyng hym now at his present neede, he might then begin againe a newe score, and would beare with hym a muche longer tyme.

The poore Duke then inforced to seeke out an old Salue for an newe Sore, whiche is to paie when he was not able to paie, with very courteous speeches, desired his Hoste to beare with his inabilitie, assuring him that when time should serue, he would so throughly recompence hym, as he should haue

cauſe to holde hym well contented.

But what prayers maie preuaile, where pitie is cleane exiled, or what gentleneſſe is to be looked for, to come from ſuch an vngentle choyle, whoſe mynde was onely ſet vppon Rape and Rauine, who had premeditated before the drift (whiche as he preſuppoſed) was now ſorted out as he looked for.

Wherefore (as it were) half in a furie, he vttered forth theſe woordes: My freend content your ſelf, and take this for a reſolute aunſwere, the money whiche now reſteth in your hands, although I might very ill forbeare it, as my caſe ſtandeth, yet for that it is not myne eaſe, to runne into any farther charges, without a better aſſuraunce, then either woordes or promiſes, I am notwiſtandyng contented to beare with you for that which is alreadie paſt, myndyng from this daie forwards to giue no further credite, and for that you are altogether a ſtraunger, vnto me vnknowne, both what you are, frō whence you come, whether you will, and where I ſhould finde you, I purpoſe therefore for my better ſecuritie, and the rather to come by that you alreadie doe owe me, to keepe your wife in paune, whom I know is ſo dearely beloued vnto you, that for her ſake I ſhall the ſooner heare from you againe, otherwiſe I knowe not where to inquire after you, nor how to come by that is my due, whiche I am not well able to forbeare, neither doe I mynde clearely to loſe.

The poore afflicted Duke, hauyng neuer faine before into cutthroates handes, perſwaded in deede that the tenour of this Varlettes woordes, and the keepyng of his wife tended to no other end, but for his better aſſuraunce to come by his money, was conſtrained to make a vertue of neceſſitie, and was ſo muche the better pleaſed, for that his wife might ſtill remaine free from farther trauaile, and thinkyng in tyme to ſettle him ſelf, and to recouer his wife and children about hym: with this reſolution he began to relate vnto his wife, with what ſalutations his gentle Hoſt had greeted him withall, deſiring her to comfort her ſelf for a ſeaſon, aſſuring to doe his beſt indeuour, and ſo ſet vp his ſailes to the proſperous gales of Fortune.

This good Ladie, hearyng her houſbandes diſcourſe vncertaine

certaine what to doe, wept bitterly, as well for greefe to loose his presence, as for that she should bee left in the house of the arrant knaue her Hoste, but like a wise Ladie, hearyng the alleadged reasons of her Lorde and housbande, did thinke it not for the best, to encrease his olde sorowe with a new greef, contented her self, vttcryng these wordes.

Deare housbande, knowyng all that you haue saied to be very iust and true, I am contented for a certaine tyme to force my will, in hope that hereafter we maie liue together, ioiyng our selues in the companie of our children, and this I would desire you, that so often as you can by conuenient and trustie messengers, to sende me word and intelligence of your health and estate, because the same should bryng greater contentation vnto me, then the welfare of myne owne self.

This saied, she imbracyng hym very louingly, and he kissing her with greate sorrowe and greefe, tooke his leaue, and badd his Ladie and spouse hartely farewell, leauyng with her Phylene her deare daughter.

Thus hymself with Aurelianus his little sonne, departed from Tariffa, towards the famous Citie of Cayre, and as thei passed through a Wildernesse, hauyng lost their waie, wandering two or three daies without any manor of foode, sauing Hippes, Hawes, and Slowes, suche as thei could gather in the Desert, the poore childe being ouer come with faintnesse, not longer able to trauaile, beganne to complaine to his afflicted Father, desiryng hym to sitte downe to rest hym self a tyme, the wofull Father tormented in his mynde, to see his poore distressed childe, sat hym doune vnder a Tree, where after a while, recountyng to hymself his sonderie missortunes, beyng oppressed and wearied with trauaile, he fell into a sound sleepe, the Childe after he had a while rested hymself, leauyng his Father a sleepe, beganne to seeke about for somethyng to slake his hunger, and as he was straiyng thus about the woodes, it fortuned the Duke of Vasconia, hauyng lost his companie in the pursute of a Stag, where he had been a huntyng, and as he was crossyng the nexte waie to goe to the Citie of Messyna, where he helde his Courte, hauyng in his companie

but the Lorde of Sura, with three or fower seruing men, he fortuned to espie the childe runnyng in the bushes all alone, and callyng the childe vnto hym, he saied, alas my little boy, what makest thou in this place, art thou here alone, or how camest thou hether I praie thee tell me. Forsothe Godfather (qᵗ the childe) I came hether with my Father, who lyes a sleepe here by, and I was seekyng somethyng to eate, for by my trothe I am so a hongered, that I could eate worse meate then a peece of a rosted Pigge, and that with all my harte.

The Duke greatly pleasuryng to heare the prety aunswere of the childe, replied in this wise: How saiest thou my little knaue, wilt thou bee my boye and dwell with me, and I will giue thee good meate thy belly full, how saiest thou wilt thou goe with me.

Yea forsooth Godfather (qᵗ the Childe) on that condition you will giue me rost meate enough, I will goe with you, for I thinke I did not eate my bellie full of roste meate, this moneth and more.

The Duke then commaunded one of his men to take vp the Childe, whom he caried awaie with hym, and now perceiuyng it to be bothe well fauoured, quicke witted, and very apt to learning, he brought it vp at Schoole, where he proued not onely wise and learned, but also in many other exercises, conuenient and fitt for Gentlemen, he commonly excelled euery other man, and thus leauyng him at Schoole, I will conuert my tale to his wofull Father, who when he was awaked, and missed his prety sonne, beganne to prie about in euery bushe, seekyng and callyng, what Aurelianus, Aurelianus, where be you Aurelianus: But in the end when he could no where finde hym, thinkyng assuredly that he had beene deuoured by some wild Beast, beganne with pitifull exclamation to crie out. O Fortune, Fortune more then fickle, who in a moment hoiste a man vp to the highest degree, and by and by, in lesse space then in the twincklyng of an eye, she throweth hym doune againe so lowe, as more miserie is prepared for hym in one daie, then she aduaunced hym in an hundred yeres, whiche I now proue, and haue experience in my self, & so muche the more, the greater

ter is my greef, who haue been nourished delicately amongest my freends, maintained stil in most prosperous estate, hoping for the full perfection of my felicities, by Marrying a Noble Dame, with whom I pretended to spende the residue of my life, accordyng to the scope and lott appointed by the almightie God, but now beholde all my enterprizes be quite pluckt backe, and my purposes tourned cleane topse toroe, in suche wise, that from honourable estate, I am driuen to wander like a Vacabonde, driuen from Poste to Piller, from Countrie to Countrie, frō Region, to Region, to sequestrate my self from amongest my freendes, without any assured place where to make my abode. Oh frowarde fate, how canst thou bee so hard harted, and voyde of pitie, still to prosecute thy cruell pursute, first to depriue me of my honourable dignities, then to banish me from amongest my louyng freendes, thirdly to seperate me from Messilina, my well beloued wife, more deare vnto me then the balles of my vnhappie eyes, and not yet contented, but now to bereue me of my sweete Infant, my onely hope of comforte in my olde age. O Death Death, the ende of all sorrowes, and the beginner of felicities, now make sharpe thy Darte, and giue no longer delaie of life, dispatche, dispatche at once, the most infortunate man that liues this day on earth: for what auailes my life, if in the gulfe af sorrowe and greefe I droune the pleasures of the same: But ah I see right well, thou preseruest the same of purpose, but to deliight in my grēues, and to triumph ouer my aduersities. And here withall the brinishe teares so streamed doune his cheekes, that he was not farther able to speake one woorde, but runnyng vp and doune the Woodes, sighing and sobbing in great anguish of mynd, and his bodie muche infeebled for want of foode and sustenaunce: He fortuned to meete certain labouryng men, that dwelt in a poore Village not farre from the place, who perceiuing by his geasture, that he was passionated in his thoughts, thei beganne with suche courtesie, as thei had learned in the Countrie, to demaunde the occasion of his greefe.

But he knowing very well, how farre thei were vnable to minister releefe to the least of his afflictions, could render no

other

other aunſwere, then piteous ſighes and ſobbes: but the poore Peſaunts, when thei had better behelde the talneſſe of his ſtature, the ſeemelineſſe of his countenance, and the comelineſſe of his perſonage, were greatly mooued with compaſſion towardes hym, and with ſuche badde eloquence as their ſkill would permit, beganne to perſwade hym to walke with them to their Cabbins, where he might refreſh hymſelf, with ſuche homely Iunckettes, as was prouided for their owne ſuppers. The Duke contented to yeelde to their requeſtes, walked along with them, where he remained all the night very penſiue and heauie in his harte, and beganne to thinke with hymſelf, that there was no more hope left for him to heare of his ſonne, and therefore beganne to imagine, how he might render ſome releef to his poore wife and daughter, whom he had left as you before haue heard.

Now there was dwellyng hard by the place, a noble man that was Lorde of the Village, who hauyng intelligence of this diſtreſſed Straunger, cauſed hym to bee ſent for, before whom when the Duke was preſented, after many queſtions debated betweene them, the Noble man demaunded of the Duke what Countrey man he was, and how he had bẽ trained vp, & then if he could be contented to plaie the Seruyngman, and would bee carefull and diligent in his Maiſters affaires, that then, he would bee contented to receiue hym into his ſeruice, and would reward hym accordyngly, as he was able to deſerue.

The Duke all aſhamed to bee knowne what he was, reuerently made aunſwere, that he was borne in the Countrey of Achaia: and that he had been trained vp in ſeruice with ſondrie Noble men, and would bee very well contented to doe his beſt indeuour, to ſerue hym with the beſt ſeruice he could doe.

Thus the poore Duke became a Seruyngman, whom we will leaue with his Maiſter, and returne to his wife, who was left in Hueſters handelyng (as you haue heard) remained in the houſe with this Uerlette, who ſought by ſondrie aſſaies, to ſatiſfie his villanous luſt, and like an experte Souldier when he commeth to beſiege a holde, firſt ſendeth his Heraulde to ſummon

ſummon the Forte, proferyng many large conditions, if they will quietly ſurrender, but if defiaunce be made, then preſently he placeth his Batterie, thunderyng forthe his Canon ſhot againſt the walles, whiche if thei bee ſo well Rampered, that there will no breache be made, yet he ceaſeth not with giftes and bribes to corrupte the Warders, not caryng how he conquereth ſo he maie haue the ſpoyle.

This vilaine in likewiſe, ſought firſt with piteous ſighes, whiche ſauſt with ſugred woordes, did ſerue in ſteede of Harauldes, to perſwade her to yeeld vp the keyes of the fortreſſe, that with peaceable entrie, he might take poſſeſſiõ at his pleaſure: but beyng by her repulſed, and the Flagge of defiaunce diſplaied vpon the Bulwarke, then with thunderyng threates he thinketh to make his Batterie, proferyng to caſt her into priſon, for the debt whiche was owing hym for her houſbande and her ſelf. Other whiles againe he would tempt her, and trie her with giftes, thinkyng that for the neceſſitie ſhe was driuen into, ſhe would haue made ſale of that, whiche ſhe preferred before her owne life.

This noble Dame, perceiuyng her ſelf ſo hardly beſet on euery ſide, fearyng in the ende, the Uerlet would worke her ſome greater deſpight, ſo inforced her ſelf, with Phylene her little daughter to fall to worke, that with weauyng and knittyng of laces, and otherwiſe with their needles, thei had gained ſo muche money, as ſhe was able to ſet her ſelf free, from out a knaues debt. And thinkyng with her ſelf, that her houſbande had remained about the Citie of Cayre, to the whiche he purpoſed to iourney when he departed from her: ſhe determined with all conuenient ſpeede to repaire thether, as well to comforte her ſelf with the companie of her Lorde and houſbande, as otherwiſe with her yearnynges to helpe to releeue hym, but for that ſhe had vnderſtandyng that the paſſage by lande, was not onely troubleſome, but alſo very inconuenient for her to trauaile, by reaſon it lay through Woodes and Deſertes, ſhe gate inteligence of a ſmall Barke that was bound thether by Sea, whiche onely ſtaied but for a winde to ſerue her turne: herewpon ſhe diſcharged her ſelf from the Tow

of

of Taryffa, and when wether ſerued, agreeyng with the Maiſter for her paſſage, her ſelf with her daughter repaired aborde the Barke, whiche beyng put to Sea, was forced by the extremitie of a contrarie winde, to put them ſelues romer for the ſafetie of their liues, to a cleane contrarie place. And where thei ment to haue ſailed to the Citie of Cayre, they were now ariued at the Citie of Cherona, where the Ladie commyng a ſhore, ſhe toyed nothyng ſo muche in the narrowe eſcape ſhe had made with life, by reaſon of the tempeſt, as ſhe ſorrowed for beyng ſo farre driuen from her houſbande, whoſe fellowſhippe ſhe more deſired, then either wealthe or worldly treaſure. But for aſmuche as both her ſelf and her daughter, were very euill at eaſe, and greatly infeebled with ſickneſſe at the Sea, and bad lyeng in the Shippe, ſhe determined to make her abode ſtill at Cherona, till ſhe might conuaie letters to Taryffa, that ſhould certifie her houſbande of all that had happened.

In the meane tyme, her houſbande hauing receiued ſome ſmall beneuolence of his Lorde and Maiſter, who had conceiued ſome good likyng of hym, by reaſon of the ſkill that he had in the ridyng of Horſe, very deſirous to render his wife ſome portion of his good fortunes, who had been ſo long tyme partaker of his euill happes, crauyng leaue of his Lorde for a tyme, came to Taryffa, where when he miſſed his wife, whoſe letters were not yet come from Cherona, and therefore could get no inteligence, but that ſhe was gone to Cayre, of purpoſe to ſeeke hym: in a greate perplexitie he traueiled towardes Cayre, where makyng greate inquirie could learne nothyng of her, from thence he poſted from place to place, from Citie to Citie, from Towne to Towne, but beyng neuer the neare his purpoſe, he then began to double his dolours, and with bitter words to curſe the celeſtiall Signes, and Planets, which raigned at the daie of his Natiuitie, and howre of his birthe, contented to yeeld hym ſelf a captiue to miſhappe, and to ſurrender hymſelf a ſubiect to Fortunes frowarde frumpes.

Beyng thus turmoyled with greate anguiſhe of mynde, wanderyng to and fro, he was brought ſo lowe and bare, that

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he was readie to begge an almes from doore to doore, and cõmyng to a poore Countrey Village, his penurie was suche, that he was glad to become a seruaunt to hym that was the Sexten of the Parishe, whom he had not serued long, but the olde Sexten his maister died, and for that he had now learned to ryng Belles, and had some cunnyng in the keepyng of a Clocke: the Parishoners were contented to place hym in his Maisters rome, the Duke thinkyng hymselfe more then thrise happie to gett so greate preferment, thanked Ladie Fortune that had so freendly dealt with hym, resoluyng hymselfe to cõtinue the office while he liued, but Fortune findyng hym so thankfull for a little, dealt more freendly with hym, as after you shall heare.

But I will first declare howe it happened with his soonne Aurelianus, who was taken vp in the woodes by the Duke of Vascony a, as before you haue heard.

But here I muste firste remember you, that the Duke chaunged his name from Aurelianus to Siluanus, whiche name he gaue hym of purpose, for that he was founde in the Woodes.

Siluanus now hauyng been trained vp at Schoole, was come to mans estate, and besides that he had the knowledge of good letters, he was comely in his personage, and of very good proportion, and in all maner of actiuities, appertainyng to a Gentleman, he exceeded euery other that was in the Courte, besides in his demeanours he was so courteous and gentle, that he gained the good will and likyng, bothe of one and other, but especially of the Duke hym selfe, who alowed hym suche large expenses, whereby to maintaine hymselfe as hyaue as the best.

Now this noble Duke hauyng no other children but one onely daughter, whose name was Valeria, in whom it seemed that bothe Vertue and Beautie had heelde some greate contention, who should beare awaie the prise, for although that in beautie and good grace she exceeded euery other Dame, yet her vertues and good conditions surmounted more her beautie, then the finest golde surmounteth leade or drosse.

This Ladie now hauyng heard greate reporte of the nobleneſſe of Siluanus, who was ſuſpected to be but ſome poore mans ſonne, by reaſon he was founde in the Woodes, began yet to beare hym very good countenaunce, whiche at the firſt proceeded but of the noble Nature, whiche euer was accuſtomed to be fauourable to ſuche, in whom was founde any worthie deſarte: but as the fiſhe whiche by little and little ſucketh vppon the baite, till at the length ſhe ſwalloweth doune the hooke, wherby ſhe hangeth faſt, not able to free her ſelf, ſo this Lady Valerya, contemplating her ſelf many tymes to behold that yong Gentleman Siluanus, was ſo farre intangled with his ſweete and pleaſaunt countenaunce, that now perforce her will, ſhe was conſtrained to yeelde to Loue, and feelyng her ſelf inſnared, and bereued of former freedome, beeyng by her ſelf alone, ſhe began to complaine as followeth.

Alas (ſaieth ſhe) is it poſſible, that now force perforce my mynde ſhould bee ſo altered, that ſtraiyng from the boundes and limites of vowed Chaſtitie: I ſhould now become amourous, and ſubiect to a certaine vnacquainted luſt, from whēce commeth this alteration? or how happeneth this vnaccuſtomed hewe? ah Loue Loue, how haſt thou tormented me, and taken awaie the healthe and ſoundneſſe of my mynde, it behoueth me to ſhewe my ſelf, as iſſued forthe of the noble houſe of Vaſconya, and with the greater care I ought to take heede, how I degenerate from the noble bloud whereof I am deſcended, rather then to ſette my mynde on a fondlyng vnknowen, vnto whom peraduenture if I diſcouer my fondneſſe, will not let to mocke me for my labour, and for all the beautie or nobleneſſe of my birthe, will make me his ieſtyng ſtocke, and ſolace hymſelf with the fondneſſe of my conceiptes. But ſtaie ſtaie vnhappie tongue, that thundereth forthe ſuche hatefull wordes againſt my beloued Siluanus. Oh thyſe accurſed wenche that can ſo vngently conceiue againſt hym, that in all his demeanours, doeth ſhewe hymſelf as noble as the beſt, but of what mettall are either Monarche, Kyng or Keiſer framed of, otherwiſe then of naturall, and common earth, whereof other men doe come? Or what maketh theſe differences, which

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by ſottiſhe opinion we conceiue, either of gentle or vngentle, otherwiſe then the ſhew of vertue and good conditions. Then the partie whom I loue, is bothe vertuous, valiaunt, ſage, of good grace, learned and wiſe. Vaunt thee then Valeria, that thou likeſt no inferiour fondlyng, vnworthie of thy loue, but a worthie Gentleman, induced with noble qualities, in whom bothe Heauen and Nature haue forgotten nothyng, to make hym equall to them that marche in formoſt ranke: It is Siluanus whom I loue, and of hym I pretende to make a lawfull houſband, for otherwiſe I deteſt to lead the filthie life of lawleſſe luſt, but thus the bonde of Mariage beyng made, I maie loue and liue without offence of conſcience, neither ſhall I do any blot or blemiſhe to the greatneſſe of my houſe. But if any bee ſo ſcrupulous, as to thinke by marriyng of hym, I ſhould deminiſhe myne honour: It is the thyng that I doe leaſt eſteeme, for what is honour worthe, where the mynde is voyde of contentation, and where the harte is bereued of his cheefeſt deſire, the bodie remaineth reſtleſſe, and the mynde is neuer in quiet. Siluanus therefore ſhall be my loyall houſbande, meanyng thereby neither to offende God nor man.

And now from hence forwardes, ſhe deuiſed with her ſelf, how to make her loue knowne to Siluanus, not ſparyng when ſhe was out of his preſence, before all men to praiſe his greate perfections, wherewith he was enriched, and in his owne preſence ſhe vſed ſuche louyng countenaunce towardes him, that although Siluanus were but yong, and had neuer been trained vp in the Schoole of Loue, yet he perceiued very well, that thoſe frendly glances were lent him of good liking, and thoſe louing countenaunces were grounded of good will, and albeit, he ſawe the inequalitie and difference betweene them both, ſhe beyng ſorted out of royall race, and hymſelf altogether ignorant of his owne eſtate, and from whence he was ſprong, yet beeyng now ledde by Loue, whoſe lawes haue no reſpect either to eſtate or dignitie, he determined to followe his Fortune, and to ſerue her, whiche ſo louyngly ſhewed her ſelf, to requite hym with the like, and the more he called to mynde the diuine beautie of his Ladie, her graces, wiſedome, behaui-

our, and curteſie, ſo muche the more increaſed his deſire, fortifyng hymſelf againſt all miſhappes, and perilles that might ſucceede, and began to debate with hymſelf in this maner.

How is it poſſible that I ſhould be ſo fooliſhe, to deſpiſe a duetie ſo rare and precioule, and to ſet light by that which the nobleſt would purſue, with all reuerence and indeuour, I am not the firſt, that hath obtained the loue of a Ladie: no no, If ſee ſhe loueth me, and ſhall not I requite it by yeeldyng loue againe, if I were ſo voyde of humanitie and good nature, beſides I might worke myne owne ouerthrowe, in ſeemyng to diſpiſe ſo noble a Ladie, ſo the Goddes would not let to miniſter reuenge, as thei did vpon Narciſſus. But ah ſillie wretche that I am, what follie is this that I haue now premeditated, with the perill of myne honour, and the hazarde of my life: ſee ſee how farre my affections begin to ſtraie, through the hot aſſaultes of fooliſhe fantaſie, inraged with an appetite riſing on vaine hope, what madneſſe on me to thinke that Valerya will ſo muche forget the greatneſſe of her houſe, or yet imbaſe her ſelf in reſpect of me poore ſillie ſoule: but what if ſhe would be contented, either in reſpect of mariage or otherwiſe in reſpect of good will, to ſurrender her ſelf to ſatiſfie my requeſt, how muche were I the neare my purpoſe, alas nothyng at al, the firſt, I knowe ſhould be denaide me by the Duke her father, and as for any other curteſie, although I knowe it bee farre frō her thought, yet ſurely myne owne conſcience would not ſuffer me, to proffer ſo greate villanie to ſo noble a Ladie, neither the reuerence and duetie whiche I owe to her father would permit me, to requite his gentilneſſe towards me with ſo greate an iniurie. Ceaſe therefore Siluanus, ſubdue thy ſenſualitie, that by vanquiſhyng thy ſelf, thou maieſt ſet open the gate to Fame, who with her Trompe of euerlaſtyng glorie, ſhe maie aduaunce thee renowmed to all poſteritie.

But alas, ſhall I then giue ouer to loue my Ladie Valerya, reaſon willes me ſo to doe, but loue hath ſo blinded al my ſenſes, that reaſon giueth no maner of light, what helpe haue I then hereafter to hope for, alas I knowe no one, and therefore be content. Herewithall he ſtaied his trauaile, reſoluyng

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with hym ſelf to conquere his affections, and beeyng in his Chamber takyng pen and yncke, he ſate him doune and wrote theſe verſes followyng.

No ſhame I truſt, to ceaſe from former ill,
Nor to reuert, the leudneſſe of the mynde:
Whiche hath bin trainde, and ſo miſled by will,
To breake the boundes, whiche reaſon had aſſyngde.
I now forſake the former tyme I ſpent.
And ſorie am, for that I was miſwent.

But blinde forecaſt, was he that made me ſwarue,
Affection fond, was lurer of my luſt:
My fancie fixte, deſire did make me ſerue,
Vaine hope was he, that trained all my truſt:
Good liking then, ſo daſeled had my ſight,
And dimnde myne eyes, that reaſon gaue no light,

O ſugred ſweete, that trainde me to this trap,
I ſawe the baite, where hooke laie hidden faſt:
I well perceiude, the drift of my miſhap.
I knewe the bit, would breede my bane at laſt,
But what for this, for ſweete I ſwallowed all:
Whoſe taſte I finde, more bitter now then gall.

But loe the fruites, that grewe by fonde deſire,
I ſeeke to ſhunne, that pleaſed beſt my mynde:
I ſterue for colde, yet faine would quenche the fire,
And glad to looſe, that faineſt I would finde,
In one ſelf thyng, I finde bothe baall and bliſſe,
But this is ſtraunge, I like no life but this.

When hee had thus penned theſe verſes, he committed them to memorie, and the next daie beyng in the companie of certaine Gentlemen and Gentlewomen in the Court, taking

a Lute, whereon he could plaie very well, and hauyng likewise good knowledge in his song, & therewithall a very pleasaunt voyce, he began to sing this dittie before mentioned, in the middest whereof came in the yong Ladie Valerya, wherewith Siluanus staied his song, but she ioynyng her self to the cõpanie, seyng the sainct that secretly shrined in her thought, she had vowed her greatest deuotion vnto, desired Siluanus, at her request, to begin his song againe: Siluanus, makyng the matter nothyng nice, was pleased very well to satisfie her request, and takyng the Lute began his song, to the whiche the Ladie gaue intentiue eare, frõ the beginnyng to the ending, and perceiuing the song to be made in some extreame passion forced by loue, she demaunded of Siluanus who had penned those verses, who aunswered, thei were of his owne pennyng, and so lately doen that he could not forget them: the Ladie then thinking Siluanus to be in loue with some other Gentlewoman, departed very speedily, as though some sodaine motion had happened to her mynde, and comming to her Chamber, shuttyng fast the doore, she began to saie as followeth.

How muche am I vnfortunate aboue all other women, that beyng a Ladie of suche bloud as I am, and yet am happened into so straunge a miserie, that in maner with myne owne mouth, I haue made request to hym, which rather with all humilitie, ought to profer me his seruice, and yet am scornfully reiected, and an other like to catche the birdes, whilest I doe but beate the bushe. Oh Siluanus Siluanus, deemest thou me no better worthe, then so lightly to reiect my proffered loue, and shall an other that is muche lesse worthie, beare awaie the sweete fruite of my desired hope, and shall possesse without desert, the glorie due to a firme and faithfull frende? No no, I can not thinke thee so ingrate, and my harte foretelleth me, that it is impossible my Siluanus should wander so farre from equitie, but that he is able to discerne of colours, and will not requite me with wrong for right, I am sure not to be deceiued in my loue, I knowe he loueth mine, but that he dareth not to disclose the same, fearyng I should refuse hym, and cast hym of with shame, I will not let therefore with myne owne

owne mouth to bewraie the same vnto hym, and to manifest my good will, whereby my chast and honest amitie once knowen vnto him, vertue her self may knit the knot betweene vs, whiche can not chuse but bryng forthe the fruites of true and perfect freendship.

And shall I then beeyng a Ladie of suche degree, bee constrained to sewe, where euery other woman of the meanest reputation, bee ordinarily required, and that with the importunate instance of their suters, I shal then be noted of boldnesse, and bee thought to straie too farre from the limites and boundes of modestie, and to make a greater show of lightnesse, thē is properly looked for in vs that be of the feminine gēder, but what strictnesse is this prescribed to our sex, that we should be bereued of our libertie, and so absolutely condemned of lightnesse in seeking to satisfie our lawful and honest desires, with what trampe be we tempered withall more then men, whereby wee should bee able to withstande the forces of the flesh, or of power to resist the concupiscenses whiche Nature it self hath assigned, we bee tearmed to be the weaker vesselles, and yet thei would haue vs more puissaunt, then either Sampson or Hercules: If man and woman bee made of one mettall, it must needes followe by consequence, we be subiect to like infirmitie, from whence commeth then this freedome, that men maie aske what thei desire of vs, be it neuer so leude, and wee maie not craue any thyng of them, that tendeth to good and honest pretence: It is termed to be but a mans parte that seeketh our dishonour, by leude and lawlesse lust, but to a woman it is imputed for lightnesse, to firme her lawfull likyng, with pure and loyall loue, if men will haue preheminence to doe euill, why should we be reproued for doyng well.

Whereupon stande I then amazed with these fonde opinions, my loue is not vnlawfull, neither before God nor man, I loue Siluanus, whom I will take for my housbande, for otherwise to loue hym, my harte doeth not intende, therefore without any farther respite or delaie, I wil make my loue knowne vnto him, and the band of Mariage once confirmed betweene vs, shall couer the fault which men would deeme, neither shall

my mynd be altered, either by the sugred perswasion of freendes, neither terrified with any threates, that maie bee thundered forthe by Parentes blusteryng wrath, I am not so farre ouerwhelmed with Pride, that in respect for the greatnesse of my Parentage, I should despise a Gentleman indued more with vertue then with riches, though there be some that be of this condition, that thei will soner preferre the greatnesse of birth, then the greatnesse of vertue, the aboundance of wealth, then the aboundance of witte, the perfection of beautie, then the perfection of the mynde, but I am out of the number of those women, whiche care more to haue their housbands purses well lined with money, whereby thei maie be maintained in their braverie, or sometymes fixe their fancie vppon some yong man, that is of goodly personage, although voyd of vertue, qualitie, and good conditions, that ought to garnishe a Gentleman, and doeth more beautifie and enriche hym, then either the bare shewe of beautie, or any other giftes of Fortune, but I cannot implope my loue vpon transitory treasure, when the riches of the mynde is cleane taken awaie: no no, it shall better content me to see a meane Gentleman beloued and praised of euery one for his vertues, then to marie a miser possessed with all the goodes of the worlde, hated and ill spoken of for his vices. Feare not then Valeria, to followe thy determination, and to put in proofe what thou hast pretended.

Here withall staiyng her self, she beganne to practise the meane, in what maner she might bewray her loue to Siluanus, seekyng for occasion and tyme meete for her purpose, and although there remained in her, a certaine naturall shamefastnesse, wherwith maidens are commonly accompained, which for a tyme did close her mouthe, and made her to deferre the tyme of her desolued mynd, yet in the ende throughly perswaded in her intent, she sent one of her Maidens, willyng Siluanus to come and speake with her, about certaine affaires that she had to implope hym: The maide hauyng finished her message, there could neuer more ioyfull newes happen to Siluanus, who entryng the Chamber of Valeria, with tremblyng harte after he had doen his reuerence, with greate feare and

bashful-

bashfulnesse saied, for that I vnderstande your Ladishyp hath to employe me about certaine affaires, I shall thinke my self the moste happiest man in the worlde, if my trauaile and diligence, might any waies doe you seruice, bee it that therein I should offer or sacrifice myne honour or life, crauyng no greater benefite for the satisfaction of all my contentations, receiued in this world, then to serue, obey, and honour you, so long as my life doeth last.

The Ladie now, all rauished with ioye and contentation, perceiuyng by his chaunge of colour, the fault proceeded of vehement loue, takyng hym aside into a windowe, Loue had so closed vp her mouth, that she knew not how to beginne her tale, her mynd was so troubled, her wits so farr out of course, that her tongue failed to doe his office, in suche wise that she was not able to speake one onely worde,

He likewise perplexed with the like Feuer, was now astonied to see the alteration of his Ladie,

Thus these twoo Louers, like twoo senceleste Images, stoode still beholdyng eche other, without any maner of mouuyng, in the ende the Ladie takyng courage in her self, with a tremblyng voyce, ioyned with a maidenlike shamefastnesse, began to saie as followeth.

Beyng assured (my Siluanus) of your discretion and wisedome, whiche Nature hath not onely indued you withall, but art hath also accomplished, what Nature beganne to woorke, I will therefore make no doubt at all, to lette you knowe the hidden secretes of my harte, neither will I goe aboute with circumstaunce to colour my woordes, but being well perswaded, that when you shall bothe heare and sauour my speeches, and therewithall sound the deapth of my deuises, you will easily coniecture, that my enterpryses bee none other then iust, and that my alledged reasons, are groũded of good pretence, I thinke sithence your arriuall here in the Court of the Duke my father, you haue not seene me in any behauiour, otherwise then vertue doeth permitte, nor in any my demeanours exceedyng the boundes of modestie, otherwise then becommeth a maiden of my callyng, beyng descended of so worthie a stock,

but if this be a faulte that beyng prouoked by the pureneſſe of my harte, and fidelitie of my good will, who to kæpe the ſame inuiolable, doe voluntarily offer my ſelf to the honeſt diſpoſition of your iudgement, as it ſhall pleaſe you to conceiue of me, I haue then committed a fault in liking you too well, but I truſt nothyng at all offended God, who knoweth the innocencie of my crime. Think not Siluanus, that I am the freend of Fortune, and practiſe pleaſure alone without vertue, for it is modeſtie that commaundeth me, and honeſtie is the guide of my conceiptes, ſwearing and proteſting by the Almightie God, that neuer man ſhall touche Valeria, except it be in Mariage, and he that otherwiſe would aſſaile me, I haue a harte that ſhall encourage my handes to ſacrifice my life. And now Siluanus, if you will not thinke me more prodigall of my preſent, then your fancie will ſerue you to take in good parte, beholde, it is you that I haue choſen for my Spouſe and loyall houſband. And although I had determined to diſſemble that, whiche now I haue laied open vnto you, yet repoſing my ſelf in your vertue and honeſtie, I truſt I ſhall not haue cauſe to repent me, for any thyng that I haue either ſaied or doen.

Siluanus whiche all this while hearing this heauenly harmonie, with full aſſuraunce of that he moſte wiſhed for, albeit he ſawe no poſſibilitie, how to bryng to paſſe this deſired Mariage, yet determined not to refuſe ſo greate a preferment, beyng ſo franke and liberally offered, aunſwered in this maner.

I knowe not Madame, with what humilitie and reuerence I might receiue, and accept this your greate bountie and nobleneſſe, ſo graciouſly offered vnto me, I do acknowledge my condition and ſtate too baſe, and that my loue may be thought to preſume too farre beyonde the boundes of order, conſideryng that my ignobilitie and birth, are no meete matches for ſuche a peereleſſe Princes, yet this I dare boldly affirme, that if loue and entire affectiõ borne to your Ladiſhip, might ſerue to counteruaile that defect, whiche by place of birthe the Deſtinies haue denaied me, I dare vndertake I ſhould as well deſerue to bee receiued, as he that is lineally deſcended from the greateſt Monarchie of the world. The whiche loue if till

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this tyme I haue delaied to open, I beseeche you Madame, to impute it to the greatnesse of your estate, and to the duetie of my callyng, but now for as muche as by your owne motion, grace, courtesie, and greate liberalitie the same is profered, and that of your owne bountie, it pleaseth you to accept me for yours: I humbly beseeche you, not to dispose of me as of a housbande, but as of one whiche both is, and shall be your seruaunt for euer. Thus saied, he takyng her by the hande, kissed it with greate deuotion, his tongue and wittes were so rapt and tied, as the Ladie perfectly perceiued this alteration, and seyng it to proceede of loue, replied on this maner.

Then my Siluanus, there needeth at this present no farther circumstaunce, but for that I am well assured, there are some that will be offended with my choice, but especially the Duke my father, who will conceiue some great displeasure against me: there resteth then that this our contract bee kept very secrete, vntill it please God to appoint the tyme, that the rest of our determinations, maie without daunger bee consummate and accomplished. In the meane tyme, trustyng that your desire is Godly, and that the freendshipp you pretende to beare me, is founded vpon vertue, and to be concluded by Mariage, receiue me for your Spouse and lawfull wife, you shall haue suche parte in me, as without any regarde to the obedience and duetie that I owe to my Parentes I am yours, beeyng readie and disposed to obeye you, so farre as my honour maie permit me.

These two louers now groundyng themselues, the one in the others fidelitie, could not so cũning'ly dissemble and cloke their affections, but that it was easily perceiued by their secret glaunces, and countenaunces conueighed from the one to the other (and as wee haue a Prouerbe) (it is ill haltyng before a creeple) so there were many about the Court, that were so wel studied in the schoole of Loue, that thei were able to haue cõmenced Maisters of Arte, and could easily coniecture from whence those rowlyng lookes did proceed, that being now assured of that whiche before was but suspected, the bruite was spread about the Court, of the loue that was betweene Silua-

nus and Valeria, that in the ende it came to the Duke her Fathers eare, who takyng the matter very grecuously, that his daughter to whom the inheritance of the Dukedome remained after his decease, should so meanely bestowe her loue of a fondlyng founde in the Woodes. And mindyng to finde a remedie for the matter, willed Siluanus that in paine of his life, within twentie daies he should departe the Courte, and neuer after to be seen within the iurisdictions of the Dukedome of Vasconia.

Valeria now hauyng intelligence what had happened, had no leasure to vexe or molest her self, when tyme rather required a speedie remedie, for the incounteryng of those mishaps, deuised with Siluanus to conueigh her self awaie, contented rather to liue in the fellowship of an honest louing husband, with whom she should hold faithful and loyal companie, with what estate and Fortune so euer it might please GOD to appoincte, then to liue without hym, beautified with the graces and foolishe names of honour and preheminence.

Siluanus, contented to satisfie her desire, with the hazarde of his life, peelded to her request, and before the twentie daies were expired, so cleanely conueighed hym self and Valeria awaie, that when thei were missyng, the Duke wist not which waies to sende after them. Wherefore in a great furie, he spared not to sende out great companies, whiche postyng euery waie, made enquirie and searche after them, but all in vaine: for Siluanus had so disguised hymself and Valeria, that without any maner of trouble, thei quietly passed the Countrey, and hauyng freede them selues from out the daunger of the Duke, desiring that the daie of their Mariage might now be prefixed, the whiche by mutuall consent, was presently determined, and by greate Fortune (or rather conduction by the prouidence of God) thei happened to arriue in the Countrey Village, where Duke Sappho ỳ was father to Siluanus, had remained al this while Sexten of ỳ Parish. In this Village, because it was a place free from resorte, whereby thei might remaine vnknowne, and in the better safetie, thei purposed alwel to celebrate their Mariage, as for a tyme to make their

aboade,

aboade, till matters were better quieted, and that thei might at leisure resolue, what course were best for them to take. Siluanus now hauyng conferred with the Priest, the Mariage daie was appointed, where the poore Belringer takyng the vewe of this newe maried couple, fell in a great likyng of Siluanus, not for that he knewe him to be his sonne, for thereof he could haue no maner of suspition, aswell for that he deemed he had been deuoured in the Woodes, by some wilde beast, as also because his name was chaunged, but whether it were by the instigation or secresie of Nature, or otherwise by the will and pleasure of God, to bring to passe that, which afterwards happened in effect, this poore Sexten I say, lead by the secret motion of his owne affections, proffered Siluanus that if his seruice might any waies stande hym in steede (for that he was a straunger in the place) he should vse hym in any respect, and should finde hym readie to stande hym in suche steade, as his poore abilitie might any waies permit.

Siluanus in like case hauing forgotten his Father, beeing separated from hym in his infancie, yet nothyng despising his freendly offer, craued his helpe for the hieryng of a Chamber, for some reasonable rent, till tyme that he might better prouide for hymself. The Sexten very glad that he had so good opportunitie to pleasure him, brought him with his wife to his owne house, where he lodged hym in the best roome that he had, profferyng not onely his house, but all that was in it to be at their disposition and pleasure. This newe Married couple now gladdyng and sportyng themselues, with all such sweete imbracementes, as thei can better describe, whiche haue been possessed with the like delightes: but as some wil saie, it is the mans parte to bee first wearied in those Generall sportes, so Siluanus hauyng now well feasted hymself, with that sweete repaste, had leisure to bethinke hym of his owne estate: began inwardly to growe into great sorrowe and heauinesse, not so muche for hymself, as for his wife, who for his sake had disposest her self from so greate honour, abandonyng her freendes, contented to yeeld her self a thrall to Fortune.

These cogitations did so nippe hym, that he could not so

well

well dissemble his greef, but that his wife perceiued some disquietnesse in his mynde, and therefore very greeuously she demaunded of hym, to shew her the cause of his discontentment, whiche by outward appearaunce, seemed inwardly so muche to molest hym.

Siluanus hearyng his Ladies request, aunswered in this wise, my deare wife, the sweetest companion that euer mã did possesse, for so muche as you so earnestly desire to vnderstand, what it is that so much withdraweth my delightes, I will not let to bewraie the truthe, whiche is this, when I consider with my self, of your present estate and condition, who from the tip and height of dignitie, haue not spared for my sake to surrender your self, to become a subiect to all mishaps, besieged on euery side, with the future assaultes of ordinarie Fortune: It maketh me therefore to haue the greater care, by what meanes I might endeuour my self, to maintaine & continue your estate, though not according to your worthinesse and calling, yet according to your wel contentment and liking. And herevpon conceiuing in my head diuers imaginations, no meanes but one in my fancie seemeth best, whiche is, that I goe to the Court of the Emperour Claudius, who at this present is leading a great bande, to encounter the Turke, at whose handes I doubt not, but to receiue some good entertainment, and besides the honour and reputation, I maie gaine by good desert, I maie likewise reape suche liuyng and good likyng of the Emperour, that in despight of Fortunes teeth, wee maie liue hereafter a quiet and honourable life, to our greate ioye and comforte. But when I did consider the beloued companie of you deare wife, I feared to bewraie that, whiche now I haue disclosed, not knowyng in what parte you would take it, that I should so sodainly departe. Loe here the cause of my disquietnesse, whiche you desire so instantly to knowe.

The Ladie whiche was wise, perceiuyng the greate loue that her housbande did beare her, when he had staied hym self from talke, with glad and merie countenaunce, aunswered in this wise.

Ah Siluanus, the exampler of all vertue and gentlenesse,

let

let death and fortune doe what thei list, for I coumpt my self more then satisfied of all that is past, by the onely enioyng of your presence, contentyng my self to bee a partaker of your misfortunes, and haue no doubt but that I can so moderat my affections, that duryng my life, I will rest better contented with that which your abilitie wil permit be it neuer so meane, then otherwise to be honoured with names and titles of nobilitie in Princely state or porte hauing not your presence. Disquiet not your self therefore, but perseuer in your determination, and that sorowe whiche shall assaile me by reason of your absence, I will sweeten and lenefie with contentation to see your commendable desire appeased: and the pleasaunt memorie of your valiant factes shal beguile my pensiue thoughtes, hoping that our next meetyng shall be more ioyfull and glad, then this our partyng shall be either heauie or sad.

The Ladies aunswere did wonderfully quiet the mynd of Siluanus, and callyng his Hoste the Sexten vnto hym, whom he had made partaker of his determinations, he departed, leauyng his wife suche money and Jewelles as thei had remainyng: And commyng to the Courte of the Emperour Claudius, he was very well entertained, and the rather for that the Emperour had greate neede of men to supplie his Armie, whiche had sustained sondrie conflictes, and diuers ouerthrowes, for the Turke did wonderfully incroche vpon the Emperour, and had taken sondrie Cities, Tounes, and Castelles from hym, and was like still euery daie more to preuaile then other, that now the Emperour beganne to repent him, of the slender accoumpte he had made of Souldiours in the tyme of peace, for that he had too few that were sufficient to serue him in his Warres: For in steede of Experience, Valiaunce, and Policie (whiche three ought to be gouernours, commaunders and cheef officers in a Campe) he was glad to preferre Vainglorie, Foolishhardinesse, and Rashnesse: Simple sottes that were more fitter to waite in Gentlewomans chambers, then to be made Captaines, or leaders in the Warres.

The Emperour now standyng in greate distresse for want of men, for those that he had made greatest accompt of in the

tyme of peace, were now able to stande him in no steede in the tyme of warres: and those that had braued it vp and doune the Courte in the newe cuttes, straunge fashions, their haire frizled, lookyng with suche grisly and terrible countenaunces, enough to make a wiseman beleeue thei were cleane out of their wittes, now in the tyme of Warres, were glad to runne vnder a Gentlewomans Farthyngall to hide them.

The Emperour (I saie) beeyng thus perplexed, called to his remembrãce the iniurie that he had doen Sappho, whom he had banished onely to satisfie the willes of those that were about him, whiche he knewe did hate him more of spight, then for any occasion the Duke had giuen. Without any farther delaie therefore, the Emperour sent sondrie messengers into euery parte of Christendome to make inquirie, that who so euer could finde the Duke, should bee worthily recompenced, and those Proclamations were spread through euery Region, in Citie, Towne, and Village. In so muche that in this Parishe where the Duke remained Sexten (as you haue heard) the Priest made inquirie on Sondaie in the Churche, as the custome is) that where as about fourteene or fifteene yeres sithence, the Duke of Mantona was banished by the Emperor, whiche was procured rather by enuie, then for any deserte, as now it was proued, who so euer therfore could giue any intelligence of the same Duke, should be very liberally recompensed by the Emperour.

The Sexten now hearyng these newes, did thinke it more better to liue still in his Sextens roome, where he remained without enuie, then to become againe the Duke of Mantona, subiecte to the spite of hatefull persones. But callyng to his mynde his wife and daughter, which he thought remained yet a liue (although he knewe not where) and for the greate loue that he bare to Siluanus, whose wife remained in his house (as you heard) seyng that Fortune offered him so good opportunitie to pleasure them, onely for their sakes, resolued hymself to goe to the Emperour. But first comfortyng his gest Valerya, whom for a time he should leaue in his house, onely with suche seruauntes as her self had about her: he tolde her that he was

well

well assured where to finde this Duke, that was so muche inquired after, and that he doubted not, (if it were but in respect of his good newes) he should worke Siluanus, her houſ bande into some credite with the Duke, who might likewise procure his better preferment with the Emperour.

And thus the Sexten departed, and with all conuenience came to the Courte of the Emperour, to whom when he had made hymselfe knowne, he was most honourably receiued, and greate ioye and gladnesse was made throughout the whole Court: the Emperour now in consideration of the iniurie he had doen hym, did not onely restore hym to his former roome and dignitie, but also aduaunced hym in honour and estimation, to be preferred before all other next vnto hymselfe.

Thus after many benefites receiued of the Emperour, the Duke prepared hymselfe, accompanied with many his freendes, to goe to the Emperours Campe, of the whiche he was made Generall, where he knewe well how to behaue hymselfe, and giuyng out new ordinaunces, he appointed certaine such as he hymselfe knewe worthie, and gaue them charge, amongest therest, seeyng Siluanus who all this while remained in the Campe, whom the Duke did very well knowe, although Siluanus, did little suspecte that a poore Sexten of a Parishe, should become a Generall to an Emperours Armie. The Duke perceiuyng hymselfe to be vnknowne to Siluanus, was cõtented so to remaine for a tyme, but yet desirous to see what was in hym, he gaue hym the leadyng of certaine Horsemen, with the whiche Siluanus serued so valiauntly, and there with all had so happie successe, that euery man extolled vp to the heauens, the worthinesse of Siluanus. This pleased the Duke passyng well, and the Duke hauyng now sondrie tymes incountred with the power of the Turkes, and had giuen them many ouerthrowes, he was now preparyng a greate force, for the recouerie of the Citie of Cayoc, the whiche the Turkes had taken before from the Emperour. And callyng Siluanus vnto hym, he saied: God graunt yong Gentleman, that your ende agree with your good beginnyng, then makyng Siluanus to kneele he dubbed hym knight, and made hym Co-

lonell of twentie Enſignes.

Siluanus after he had dooen his reuerence, thanked the Duke of the honour and fauour, whiche it had pleaſed hym to dooe hym, promiſyng to dooe ſo well in tyme to come, as he ſhould not bee deceiued in his conceiued opinion, whereof he gaue aſſured teſtimonie at the aſſaulte that was giuen to the Citie before mentioned, where he behaued hymſelf ſo valiantly, as he was the firſt that mounted vppon the walles, and by his dexteritie and inuincible force, made waie to the Souldiours in the breach, whereby thei entered and tooke the Citie, killyng and driuyng out their enemies before them. In many ſuche like attemptes Siluanus ſtill ſhewed hym ſelf ſo noble and valiaunt, that his praiſe and renowne was ſounded in euery place.

The Duke now hauing recouered againe al ſuche Cities, Townes, and other Fortes, whiche the Turke had before taken from the Emperour, and there with all had baniſhed the Turkes from out the boundes, and borders of the Empire, and a League agreed vppon betweene the Emperour and the Turke. The Armie beeyng broken vp, and Souldiours diſcharched, euery man well recompenſed for his ſeruice, accordyng as he had deſerued. Siluanus likewiſe, who by his worthineſſe, hauing not onely made himſelf famous to the world, but alſo had well lined his purſe with good ſtore of golde, bethinkyng hym now of his faire Ladie, came to the Duke to haue take his leaue, but the Duke mindyng now to performe the good that he ment to Siluanus, was reſolued in his mynd, that Siluanus with his wife ſhould bee his geſtes, as well at Mantona where he was Duke, as thei had been before, where he was but a Sexten, ſaied to Siluanus as followeth.

Sir Knight, what haſt is this, that you would ſo ſodainly withdrawe your ſelf from out my companie, belike you haue ſome faire wife, to whom you make ſuche ſpeede to bee gone, but ſir content your ſelf to beare me companie to the Emperours Courte, where I doubte not but you ſhall receiue ſome better recompence for your ſeruice ſo happely begunne, for it is not requiſite, but that the vertue of valiaunce, ought to bee

rewarded

rewarded and cherished by Princes, that bee aided in their necessitie, with the diligence of suche vertuous and noble Gentlemen as your self. Siluanus greatly cõforted with these wordes of the Duke, was well pleased to waite vpon hym. Thus thei tooke their iourney towardes the greate Citie of Cherona, whiche was in the vttermoste borders of the Emperours Dominions, there the Duke purposed to staie a while, to recreate hymself with the rest of his companie.

Now it fortuned that the valiaunt actes, and hautie enterprises of Siluanus were so renowmed and spread, that the fame therefore came to the eares of the Duke of Vasconya, that was father to Valerya the wife of Siluanus, who with all possible speede made suche haste, that he came to Cherona, where he found Siluanus in the companie of the Duke of Mantona, to whom turnyng hymself, he saied as followeth.

Sir Duke, the onely hope that I haue, that you will not let to extende Justice vpon the mischeeuous and vngracious actes of wicked men, doeth let me at this instaunt to forbeare with myne owne handes, to auenge the wrong that I assure my self, to haue receiued of this Traitour Siluanus.

The companie were wonderfully abashed with these wordes, but especially the Duke of Mantona, who loued Siluanus more dearely then any other.

But the other goyng still forwardes in his tale saied, if the harte breake that afflicteth the soule of a wofull father, whose house is made defolate by loosyng his childe, by the mischeeuous inticementes of a Theefe, if this president I saie, moue you not to minister suche speedie reuenge, as the Lawe doeth prescribe, I suppose that all impunitie of vice and sinne hath place on your behalf. And there withall staiyng his talke, but yet by his gesture and countenaunce so inraged, that he seemed like a man that were besides hymself.

The Duke of Mantona now perceiuyng the matter, that Valerya was the daughter of the Duke of Vasconia, whom he supposed to haue been of some meane birth and parentage, was wonderfully sorie for Siluanus, whose fact by the Lawe deserued death, and seyng the Duke in suche a furie, he wiste

not by what meanes to worke Siluanus safetie, for to intreate the Duke he thought it but vaine, and to bring Siluanus to aunswere the fact, he knewe the Lawe would condemne him, and therefore knowyng where Valeria did remaine, whom he knewe did loue Siluanus as her owne life, and thinkyng that her teares might lenifie and soften the hardened harte of the Duke her father. He therefore priuely sent for her, to bee brought immediatly to the Citie of Cherona, in the meane tyme he committed Siluanus into safe custodie, and desired the Duke at his request to staie himself a while, and he should haue suche Justice on Siluanus, as hymself would require.

Matters beeyng thus pacified for a while, I will in like case let them rest for a time, and will now discourse how it befell to the Duchesse Messilina, with her daughter Phylene.

You haue heard before how by constraint of weather at the Sea, thei were driuen to this Citie of Cherona, where the Duke now remained, and at her first comming, fallyng to her worke as before she had doen at Taryffa, a riche Marchaunt that dwelt in the Towne, takyng the vewe of this new come workewoman, fell into so great a likyng with her, that onely to haue accesse to come into her companie, he bestowed more money in cloath to make hym Shirtes and Handcarchifes in one weeke, then he was able to weare out in three yeares after, whiche he put to her to make, whereby he became something well acquainted with her, but to the ende that she might thinke her self somethyng the better beholdyng vnto hym, he proffered her a more conuenient house then that she was in, whiche he would furnishe with all maner of housholde stuffe for a reasonable rent. She beeyng very glad of so good an offer, became his Tenaunt. The Marchaunt now perceiuyng his tyme did so well serue hym, without any greate circumstaunce, declared vnto her the great good will he bare her, but Messilina so delaied hym with suche wise and reasonable aunswers, that from tyme to tyme the Marchaunt hymself could not importunatly craue that whiche with suche modestie, she so honestly denaied hym.

Now there laie in this Citie of Cherona, the old Dutches

of

of Petrona, who hauing inteligence of Messilina to be so good a worke woman, she sent for her, to whom she put sondrie parcelles of worke, whiche she so well finished to the liking of the Dutches, that from tyme to tyme she still plide her with the like, whereby Messilina, with her daughter Phylene, had continuall recourse to the Pallas of the Dutches, where Arabianus the onely sonne of the Dutches of Petrona, (and inheritour of the Dukedome, but that he was vnder age) did marke and beholde the beautie and good grace of this yong Seamester Phylene, was so clogged and fettered in the bandes of loue, that all other thoughtes seemed lothsome vnto hym, and euery other ioye displeasaunt, in respect of the pleasure that he suffered, by thinkyng of his faire Phylene, wherefore baityng himself with hope, and tickled onely by loue, he determined what soeuer happened to loue her.

Whiche beeyng perceiued by his Mother, she began very sharpely to rate hym, blamyng hym that would so indiscretly place his loue, not waiyng his estate and birthe, as come of Princely rate, and now would make hym self a fable to the worlde, to like of suche a one so farre vnworthie his degree.

Arabianus fallyng doune vppon his knees, moste humbly desired his Mother to beare with all that was paste, and although it were truth that she had saied, that he deemed her for her birthe to bee vnworthie his degree, yet she deserued for her beautie to bee compared to the greatest Dame, and hyaest Minion els where. And whereas other girles by artificiall meanes and trumperies, doe inforce that whiche the heauens haue denaied them, yet Phylene had no other ornament then that whiche Nature had inlarged in her: and otherwise for her vertue, wisedome, and modestie, he knewe it to be suche by reporte of many, as she might bee a Lanterne to the greatest Dame that liued.

Notwithstandyng Madame, for so muche as you doe take my facte in so ill parte, consideryng the reuerence, that I owe to the place whiche you holde on my behalfe, and the duetie and obedience that God will and hath commaunded, that children should beare to those that haue begotten and borne them:

if it pleaſe you to pardon me of this that is paſt, I proteſt that from henceforth, I will be more wiſe and better aduiſed, how I enter into any thyng that might turne to any ſuche conſequence, or any maner of waies to offende you.

The Dutches knowyng all to bee true that her ſonne had ſaied, very well pleaſed with his ſpeeches, remained ſatiſfied, thinkyng in her mynde in deede, that if Phylene had bin the Daughter but of ſome meane Gentleman, her ſonne ſhould neuer haue ſought farther for a wife.

From this tyme forwards, although Arabianus by the perſwaſion of his Mother, had vowed to reuolt and let ſlippe the loue that he bare to Phylene, yet he could not ſo clearely looſe his likyng, but that he did manifeſt ſome part of his good wil, by giftes and good countenaunces whiche ſtill he beſtowed vpon Phylene, cauſing his Mother likewiſe to beſtowe many liberall rewardes vppon Meſſilina, thus the Mother and the Daughter perceiued them ſelues a thouſande tymes beholdyng to the olde Dutches and her ſonne.

In this meane ſpace the Marchaunt before mentioned had buried his wife, and knowyng no other but that Meſſilina his Tenaunt had been a widowe, he began now a freſhe ſute, and with greate importunitie requeſted her in the waie of Mariage, and ſo hardly he laied vnto her, that Meſſilina not knowyng otherwiſe how to rid hym, confeſſed vnto hym that ſhe had a houſbande aliue and therefore might not marie.

The Marchaunt thinkyng theſe to be but delaies to ſhift hym of, came to this point, that if hereafter he could proue her by her owne confeſſion to bee a widowe, that then before witneſſe ſhe would take hym for her lawfull houſbande, and till that tyme he would no farther trouble her till he had made his proofe, ſhe beeyng glad to bee at reſt, thinkyng that he ſhould worke very wiſely to make her confeſſe her ſelf to bee a widowe, agreed to his requeſt, and witneſſe was had in the matter. The Marchaunt now lettyng his matter reſt a tyme for his better purpoſe, in the ende comming vnto her, he told her, that although ſhe were ſo diſcourteous to forſake his freendſhippe in euery reſpect, firſt in the waie of good fellowſhippe,

and

and after in the waie of Marriage, whereby he was driuen to goe seeke farther, but now hauyng found a wife in the Countrey, to whom he was assured, and ment presently to bee married, yet for the old freendshippe that he bare her, considryng that he would presently remaine in the Countrie altogether, and forsake the Citie, therefore for her better securitie, and assuraunce of her dwellyng, he would make her a Lease of the house that she dwelt in, for one and twentie yeres, if it might doe her any pleasure, without paiyng any penie Income.

Messilina giuyng hym greate thankes, tooke his offer verie courteously, and the Lease was put to making, whiche the Marchaunt signed and deliuered, and herewithall desired her single Obligation, for the performaunce of some small rente, were it neuer so little, that she might acknowledge hym to be her Landlorde, the whiche she neuer denaied to giue.

The Obligation was made in this maner. Knowe all mē by these presentes, that I Messilina Widowe, and so forthe, with wordes in maner and forme of euery Obligation. This Obligation thus made, was signed and deliuered by Messilina to the Marchaunte, who had now gotten that so long he had sought for, and by vertue of this Obligation, craued Messilina to bee his wife, she denaiyng his demaunde, but what could that preuaile, when he had her owne hande and seale to shewe, whereby she confessed her self a Widowe, and then by her owne agrement (as you haue heard before) she must yeeld her self to be his wife.

This matter was long in fendyng & prouyng, in so muche that the Duke beyng now in the Toune, ministeryng of Justice to suche as would craue it, the Marchaunte brought the matter before the Duke, who hearyng the maner of the Bargaine, and so many witnesses to affirme the same, gaue Sentence that the Marchaunte ought in deede to haue her. But Messilina fallyng at the feete of the Duke, desiring him with teares to deferre his Judgement: the Duke now takyng better bewe of the woman, knowyng her bothe by her voice, and also by lookyng well on her face, perceiued assuredlie that it was his owne wife, he called againe to the Marchaunt to see

obligation, whiche whē he had receiued, he saide in this maner.

Maister Marchaunt, this obligation whiche you haue deliuered me, now I haue perused with better aduise, I finde it to bee neither sufficient nor lawfull, for this woman that you would make a Widowe, without doubt is Married, and hath a housebande, now she beeyng vnder couert barne, you Obligation is vnpleadable, and I knowe not whom you should blame, whether your self, or the Scriuener. And here withall beyng replete with great ioye and gladnesse, taking his wife vp in his armes, verie louinglie imbraced her, he saied.

Ah my deare and louing Wife, how muche am I bounde, to render innumerable thankes to the almightie GOD, that when all hope was paste, haue yet againe recouered my greatest hope and comfort. Messilina likewise perceiuyng her lord and housebande, clasping her handes aboute his necke, was not able to speake a woorde for ioye and contentation: The companie that stoode by, amazed to see this sodaine happe, were likewise verie ioyfull to see this freendly meeting. The Marchaunt seeyng how he had been deceiued, tare his Obligation, and departed all ashamed. The Duke now desirous to see his Daughter Philene, caused her Mother to sende for her, who not knowyng her Father, otherwise then by report, fell doune on her knees to craue his blessyng: The Duke taking her vp, kissing her with Fatherlie affectiou, could not stay his teares, in remembryng her brother Aurelianus, whom he deemed to be dedde.

These newes were sodainly spred throughout the Citie of Cherona, in so muche that Arabianus hauyng now intelligēce, that Philene was the daughter of the noble Duke Sappho, certifyng his Mother the truthe whiche he had learned, without any greate deliberation, bothe the Mother and the sonne, comming to visite the Duke and his companie, where thei were verie well welcomed, but especially to Messilina, to whom the old Duches and her Soonne, bothe had been verie bountifull: And when a while thei had passed the tyme with pleasaunt discourses of all that had passed, the Duches of Petrona craued Philene in Marriage for her Sonne. The duke

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beyng made priuie to the matter, knowyng Arabianus to bee come of greate discent, and to bee indued with large and faire possessions, seyng hym likewise to bee a toward yong Gentlemanne, would not stande against it, but referred the matter to his Daughters likyng. Philene who had been greatly bound to the courtesie of the yong Duke, and had receiued many giftes and good turnes at his handes, would not do as a nomber of these nise Dames, that will many tymes make daintie of that thei would faineste come by, gaue her free consent. There was then no more to dooe, but to prepare for the Marriage, whiche was presently solemnized with great pompe & glory.

By this Valeria (whom as you haue heard before, the duke had sent for) was come to Cherona, who was priuely lodged by the Dukes commaundemente, in a priuie place. The daie now beyng come, that Siluanus was brought to his answere, he could not denaie the facte wherewith he was charged, but that he had stolne Valeria from her father, by whiche confessiõ the Lawe condemned hym to dye. There were many that knewe the nobleneste of Siluanus, that began to entreate the Duke of Vasconia to remitt the facte, but all in vaine, for the more thei entreated, the more he hastened to see execution.

The Duke of Mantona seeyng his greate obstinacie, did thinke it hye tyme to finde a remedie for Siluanus, if it might bee, therefore he saied, sir Duke, were it possible that this condemned manne, who is like (so farre as I can see) to beare the whole brunte, and yet might bee enticed to this facte by your Daughters meanes, or at the leaste, your daughter muste bee halfe partner of this fault, and peelded with her good will to come awaie, for otherwise it had been vnpossible for hym, to haue brought her from out your Courte, whiche if it bee true, if you will needes see Justice so duely executed in the one, I can not see how your daughter can goe quite, but must bee as well partaker of the punishement, as she was in the facte, by peeldyng her consent.

The Duke of Vasconia auuswered, as it is the office and duetie of euery good Justicer, to knowe the valour and difference, betweene vertue and vice, to the ende that all vertuous

actes maie be honoured, and the contrarie chastised and punished: Otherwise he is not worthie the name of a righteous Iudge, but of a cruell and traiterous Tiraunt, wherefore sir Duke, you sittyng here in the place of Iustice, to minister equitie and right, to euery one that calleth. Then I desire that I maie haue the Lawe extended vpon this wretche Siluanus, as for my daughter that you speake of, as I knowe not where she is, so I doe not desire to learne what is become of her, but this I protest, that if euer I maie finde her, rather then she should escape vnpunished, I will not let with mine owne handes, to do execution vpon her, according to her demerites, and the filthinesse of her fact: from henceforthe denouncing her to be any childe of mine, and make no better accoumpt of her, otherwise then to be a filthie strompet, vnworthie of me her father, or to chalenge her descent from suche a stocke.

The Duke of Mantona was now troubled worse then before, for where as he had some hope, that the humble suite of Valeria, should something haue moued her father to compassion, he now thought that her sight, would rather increase his rage and furie: Againe he thought, that to bring her into his presence, if he continued in one moode, he might worke Valeria so greate preiudice, as hee would be hartelie sorie to see. Yet thinking with himself, that it was impossible, that a Father should bee voide of good Nature, to see the vtter ruine of his childe without any remorse: He caused Valeria to bee sent for, who beyng conducted to the place, seyng her Father and the reste of the companie, she beganne to coniecture that all was not well. But when Siluanus sawe his Valeria, wondering by what meanes she was brought to so euill a banquett, remembryng what wordes her father before had protested, she began with a piteous voice to crie out.

O my deare beloued wife, the onelie cause of my ioye and quiet, what euill Fortune hath conducted thee to this place, what froward Faates haue forced thee, that thou shouldest be made companion of my mishappes. O fraile and inconstaunt Fortune, how hast thou fronted my honest desires, with suche crooked spight, that where I coueted the countenauce of greatest

teſt credite, there I am forced to hazard the loſſe of life and al-what crooked aſpecte hath gouerned my proceadinges, that the hoped time I ſpente in this Warlike ſeruice, ſhould thus conclude with his contrarie, and I forced as it were by Faate to followe the vnhappie euent of theſame, wherein I doe confeſſe my Predeſtinate follies. But ſuche are the ſonderie dealinges of this life, as thoſe that tende their ſteppes to monſterous mountaines, doe ſometime ſcarce conclude with meane Moole hilles, the ſondrie conflictes of Fortune, maſking my hope with a ſhewe of happie reward, hath not onelie wracked me, but it threateneth the ſequell of worſe ſucceſſe: That in ſtead of happie and quiet life, my daies ſhalbee a bridged with moſte ſhamefull and vile Death. O Valeria, Valeria, the ioye and comfort of my life, I ſhall no more ſee that incomparable beautie of thine, whiche darkeneth and obſcureth the Raies and Beames of the Sunne.

Then tourning himſelf to the Duke of Vaſconia, he ſaied, I moſte humblie beſeeche your Grace, to haue compaſſion vpon me, not for that I would conſume my life in your diſpleaſure, I make offer of theſame to your mercifull will and diſpoſition, chooſing rather to die, and to leaue your Grace ſatiſfied and contented, then to liue a happie life, your Princelie minde diſpleaſed, and albeit, the right good intent, and vnſtained conſcience is free from faulte, yet the iudgement of men hath farther relation, to the exteriour apperance, then to vertues force. Is it a ſinne to Marrie? Is it a faulte to flie and auoide the ſinne of Whoredome? What Lawes bee theſe then, where the Marriage bed and ioyned Matrimonie, is purſued with like ſeueritie, as Murther, Theſte, Adultrie. But ſeyng the fault of this miſhap, to a riſe by my predeſtinate euill luck I moſte humblie beſeeche you, to mitigate your rage, and to conceiue no ſiniſter opinion of this your worthie daughter, whoſe ſmalleſt greef, is my double paine: as for my ſelf I am well pleaſed with my miſfortune, contented to Sacrifice my life, onelie to receiue your cleare acquitaunce for my offence, and will make ſatiſfaction with the price of my blood.

The Duke of Vaſconia bending his browes, aunſwered:

No Traitour no, it is not thy life that shall appease my furie, but I will so coole the Whorishe heate of your Minion, for whom you seeme so muche to pleade, that I will make her an example to all others, for dooyng of an acte so detestable. But what abuse haue thei committed, vnder the title of Marriage, thinkyng without remorse of conscience, by that meanes to continue their mischeef, and their promise and faithe, that was made vnder a Bushe, muste serue for a cloake and Visarde for their moste filthie Whoredome. But what if their Marriage were concluded, and confirmed by God hymself: Is Siluanus a manne worthie to be alied, or mingled with the roiall blood of the house of Vasconia, no, no, I vowe I will neuer take sounde nor restfull sleepe, vntill I haue dispatched, that infamous facte from our blood, and that villaine Whoremonger with his trull, be vsed accordyng to their desertes.

Valeria now knowyng how matters were sorted out, and hearyng this cruell Sentence, pronounced by her Father, fel doune vpon her knees, and bitterly cryng out, she saied: My deare father, moste humblie I beseche yon, sith no other thyng maie appease your ire, then the life of the offender, let not this Gentleman abide the penaunce of that, whiche he neuer committed, be reuenged on me, by whom the faulte (if a womans faithe to her housebande, maie be termed a fault) is doen. And let this infortunate Gentleman depart, who God knowes is innocente of any other crime, then what he was brought into, onely by my prouocation. And as she was aboute to haue proceded farther in her talke, her Father interrupted her, saiyng.

Haue you founde your tongue now pretie peate, then wee must haue an Almon for Parrat: how durst thou Strompette chalenge me to bee thy Father? That without regard, either of my renowme, or of the honour of my house, thou art content to bee abandoned from this noble Estate, and to become a Fugitiue and a straunger, to followe a Roge vp and doune the Countrey, no Minion no, thinke not that any Feminine flatterie, shall stay me from doyng thee to death, nor your darlyng that standes by you, shall escape with his life, verelie beleeuyng, that in tyme it shall bee knowne, what profite the

worlde shall gaine, by purgyng the same of suche an infected plague: and I do hope besides this, that in tyme to come, men shall praise this deede of myne, who for preserving the honor of my house, haue chosen rather to do to death twoo offenders then to leaue the one of them aliue, as lesse faultie or giltlesse then the other.

Valeria once againe sallyng frustrate before her Father, saied: I moste humblie beseche you, for that all other comfort is denaied me, that I maie craue this onely grace at your handes, for the laste good that euer I hope to receiue, whiche is, that you beeyng thus greeuouslie offended with me, doe vengeaunce at your pleasure vpon her, who willinglie yeeldeth her selfe to the Death, with the effusion of her blood, to satisfie your ire, graunt onely that Siluanus, who is innocent and free from fault, maie goe quite.

But her father no longer able for anger to heare her speak, crieth out to the Duke, to hasten the execution, the Duke of Mantona, whose harte did bleede in his beallie for sorowe, perceiuyng it follie to delaye longer tyme, gaue Sentence of death, and present execution to be made, although he tooke so greate sorowe for theim, as if his Daughter Philene should haue borne them companie: but he was not able to help it, the lawes and ordinaunces of the Countrie would not otherwise permitt. And thinking to take his laste farewell of Siluanus, he saied: O Siluanus, the glorie and honor of all yong Gentlemen that euer wer, that be now, or shalbe hereafter this, whose vertue, valliaunce, and worthie exploites, doe glister emongst the multitude, as the Sunne beames doe vpon the cirquet of the Yearth. Oh that thy hard Fortune should conduct thee to suche distresse, that onelie by thine owne valiaunce and prowesse, haste escaped so many daungers, emongst thy thronged enemies, and now thy ruine and ouerthrowe, shculd bee thus wrought, amiddest thy assured freendes, that knowes not how to helpe it. What heapes of cares hath besieged me on euerie side? To thinke that I should craue thy companie, whereby thou art brought into the middest of so great mischeef, whiche otherwise mightest haue escaped this mishappe: and thou Va-

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leria would God thy vnfortunate hoste, whiche departed from thee, thinking to doe thy housebande pleasure, had remained with thee a poore Sexten still, till this present daie.

The rest of the companie that stoode by, hearyng the duke to make so greate lamentation, was likewise striken into a meruailous greef and sorowe, in so muche that euery one that durste speake, cried to the Duke of Vasconia for pardon, and that he would remitt the offence, and what pitie it were, if he should seeke the death of so noble a Gentleman, as Siluanus had shewed hym self to be: But the Duke perseueryng still in one minde, asked thē, with what face thei could make request for a verlet of no reputation, whom he had found in the woodes, and brought hym vp to that estate he was come to, not knowyng who was his Father, but by seemyng some poore Countrie Cloune, and forgettyng him self from whence he sprong, neglecting so many benefites, which he had bestowed vpon hym, would enter into those thinges, so farre vnseemely and exceading his degree.

The Duke of Mantona, giuing good eare to this tale, remembring his Soonne Aurelianus, whom he had loste in the Woodes aboute those partes, questioned with the Duke, of the time, and what apparell the childe had on at that present, who in all thinges shewed a trothe as it was: He demaunded farther, how he knewe his name to be Siluanus, or whether he had any other name, yes (quoth the Duke of Vasconia) his name he saied was Aurelianus, whiche my self changed to Siluanus, because I founde him in the Woodes.

Herewithall without any farther staie, the Duke of Mantona running hastely vpon Siluanus, imbrasyng him in his armes, cryng: O my sonne, my sonne, and with this sodain ioy, the teares trickling doune his cheekes so faste, that he was not farther able to speake one worde.

The Duke of Vasconia muche amazed to see this sight, but a greate deale more gladde, that Siluanus had founde out suche a father, and now nothing at al offended with his daughters choice, came likewise with chearfull countenaunce, and imbraced Siluanus, desiring bothe the Duke his Father, and

him

hymselfe to forgiue what was past, and takyng Valerya by the hande, he deliuered her to Siluanus, promisyng hym for her dowrie 40000. Franckes in golde presently to bee paied, and after his decease to remaine for his inheritour.

Siluanus better pleased with Valeria her self, then with all the rest that was promised, gaue hym greate thankes, and so did the Duke his father.

All the companie were replenished with the greatest ioye that might be, to see this sodaine sight, and thus thei departed to the Pallas where the Duke kept his abode, where Siluanus was welcomed, to his mother, to his sister, to Arabianus, and to all the rest, where there was greate feastyng and triumphe, and a bonde of euerlastyng amitie betweene the houses of the Duke of Mantona, the Duke of Vasconya, and the Duke of Petrona, and after a while thei had feasted and sported them selues, thei rode altogether in companie to the Emperours Courte, who receiued them with so greate honour as he could deuise, and making himself a partaker of their mirth, wonderyng to here the hole discourse how thynges had happened, when after a while he had feasted them, and shewed them as greate pleasures as might be deuised, he bestowed of them all large and bountifull giftes, but especially of the two yong Ladies Valerya and Phylene, and this agreeing amongest themselues, to meete once a yeare at the least to sporte and make themselues merrie, for this season thei departed, euery one where it liked them beste.

Of Apolonius and Silla.

The Argument of the ſecond Hiſtorie.

¶Apolonius *Duke hauing ſpent a yeares ſeruice in the warres againſt the Turke, returning homeward with his companie by Sea, was driuen by force of weather to the Ile of* Cypres, *where he was well receiued by* Pontus *Gouernour of the ſame Ile, with whom* Silla *daughter to* Pontus, *fell ſo ſtraungely in loue, that after* Apolonius *was departed to Conſtantinople,* Silla *with one man followed, and commyng to Conſtantinople, ſhe ſerued* Apolonius, *in the habite of a man, and after many pretie accidentes fallyng out, ſhe was knowne to* Apolonius, *who in requitall of her loue maried her.*

THere is no child that is borne into this wretched worlde, but before it doeth ſucke the mothers milke, it taketh firſt a ſoope of the Cupp of errour, which maketh vs when we come to riper yeres, not onely to enter into actiõs of iniurie, but many tymes to ſtraie from that is right and reaſon, but in all other thynges, wherein wee ſhewe our ſelues to bee moſte dronken with this poiſoned Cuppe, it is in our actions of Loue, for the Louer is ſo eſtraunged from that is right, and wandereth ſo wide from the boundes of reaſon, that he is not able to deeme white from blacke, good from bad, vertue from vice: but onely led by the appetite of his owne affections, and groundyng them on the fooliſhneſſe of his owne fancies, will ſo ſettle his likyng, on ſuche a one, as either by deſerte or vnworthineſſe,

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will merite rather to be loathed then loued.

If a question might be asked, what is the ground in deede of reasonable loue, whereby the knot is knit, of true and perfect freendship: I thinke those that be wise would aunswere: Deserte, that is, where the partie beloued, doeth requite vs with the like, for otherwise, if the bare shewe of beautie, or the comelinesse of personage, might bee sufficient to confirme vs in our loue. Those that bee accustomed to goe to Faires and Markettes, might sometymes fall into loue with twentie in a daie: Deserte must then bee (of force) the grounde of reasonable loue, for to loue them that hate vs, to followe them that flie from vs, to fawne on them that frowne on vs, to currie fauour with them that disdaine vs, to bee glad to please them that care not how they offende vs: who will not confesse this to be an erronious loue, neither grounded vpon witte nor reason. Wherfore right curteous Gentlewomen, if it please you with pacience to peruse this Historie following, you shall see Dame Errour so plaie her parte, with a Leishe of Louers, a Male and twoo Females, as shall worke a wonder to your wise iudgement, in noting the effect of their amourous deuises and conclusions of their actions. The first neclecting the loue of a noble Dame, yong, beautifull, and fatre, (who onely for his good will, plaied the parte of a Seruing man, contented to abide any maner of paine onely to beholde hym: He againe setting his loue of a Dame that despising hym, (being a noble Duke) gaue her self to a Seruing man (as she had thought) but it otherwise fell out, as the substance of this tale shall better discribe. And because I haue been somethyng tedious in my first discourse, offending your patient eares, with the hearing of a circumstaunce ouer long. From hence forth, that whiche I minde to write, shall be doen with suche celeritie, as the matter that I pretende to penne, maie in any wise permit me, and thus followeth the Historie.

During the tyme that the famous Citie of Constantinople, remained in the handes of the Christians, amongst many other noble men, that kepte their abidyng in that florishyng Citie, there was one whose name was Apolonius, a worthie

Duke, who beyng but a very yong man, and euen then newe come to his possessions whiche were very greate, leuied a mightie band of men, at his owne proper charges, with whom he serued against the Turke, duryng the space of one whole yeare, in whiche tyme although it were very shorte, this yong Duke so behaued hymself, as well by prowesse and valiaunce shewed with his owne handes, as otherwise, by his wisedome and liberalitie, vsed towardes his Souldiours, that all the worlde was filled with the fame of this noble Duke. When he had thus spent one yeares seruice, he caused his Trompet to sounde a retraite, and gatheryng his companie together, and imbarkyng themselues he set saile, holdyng his course towardes Constantinople: but beeyng vpon the Sea, by the extreamitie of a Tempest whiche sodainely fell, his fleete was deserued some one waie, and some an other, but he hymself recouered the Ile of Cypres, where he was worthily receiued by Pontus Duke and gouernour of the same Ile, with whom he lodged, while his Shippes were newe repairyng.

This Pontus that was Lorde and Gouernour of this famous Ile, was an auncient Duke, & had two children, a sonne and a daughter, his sonne was named Siluio, of whom hereafter we shall haue further occasion to speak, but at this instant he was in the partes of Africa, seruyng in the Warres.

The Daughter her name was Silla, whose beautie was so pereleſſe, that she had the soueraintie amongest all other Dames, aswell for her beautie as for the noblenesse of her birth. This Silla hauing heard of the worthinesse of Apolonius, this yong Duke, who besides his beautie and good graces, had a certaine naturall allurement, that beyng now in his company in her fathers Courte, she was so strangely attached with the loue of Apolonius, that there was nothing might content her but his presence and sweete sight, and although she sawe no maner of hope, to attaine to that she most desired: knowing Apolonius to be but a geste, and readie to take the benefite of the next Winde, and to departe into a straunge Countrey, whereby she was bereued of all possibilitie euer to see hym againe, and therefore striued with her self to leaue her fondenesse,

nesse, but all in vaine it would not be, but like the foule which is once limed, the more she striueth, the faster she tieth her self. So Silla was now constrained perforce her will to yeelde to loue, wherefore from tyme to tyme, she vsed so greate familiaritie with hym, as her honour might well permit, and fed him with suche amourous baites, as the modestie of a maide could reasonably afforde, whiche when she perceiued, did take but small effect, feelyng her self so muche out raged with the extreamitie of her passion, by the onely countenaunce that she bestowed vpon Apolonius, it might haue been well perceiued, that the very eyes pleaded vnto him for pitie and remorse. But Apolonius commyng but lately from out the fielde, from the chasing of his enemies, and his furie not yet throughly desolued, nor purged from his stomacke, gaue no regarde to those amourous entisementes, which by reason of his youth, he had not beene acquainted with all. But his mynde ranne more to heare his Pilotes, bryng newes of a merie winde, to serue his turne to Constantinople, whiche in the ende came very prosperously: and giuyng Duke Pontus hartie thankes for his great entertainment, takyng his leaue of hymself, and the Ladie Silla his daughter, departed with his companie, and with a happie gaale arriued at his desired Porte. Gentlewomen according to my promise, I will heare for breuities sake, omit to make repetition of the long and dolorous discourse recorded by Silla, for this sodaine departure of her Apolonius, knowing you to bee as tenderly harted as Silla her self, whereby you maie the better coniecture the furie of her Feuer.

But Silla the further that she sawe her self bereued of all hope, euer any more to see her beloued Apolonius, so muche the more contagious were her passions, and made the greater speede to execute that she had premeditated in her mynde, whiche was this: Amongest many seruauntes that did attend vppon her, there was one whose name was Pedro, who had a long tyme waited vpon her in her Chamber, whereby she was well assured of his fidelitie and trust: to that Pedro, therefore she bewaied first the feruẽcie of her loue borne to Apolonius, coniuryng hym in the name of the Goddes of Loue her self,

and bindyng hym by the duetie that a seruaunt ought to haue, that tendereth his Mistresse saftie and good likyng, and desiryng hym with teares tricklyng doune her cheekes, that he would giue his consent to aide and assist her, in that she had determined, whiche was for that she was fully resolued to goe to Constantinople, where she might againe take the vewe of her beloued Apolonius, that he accordyng to the trust she had reposed in hym, would not refuse to giue his consent, secretly to conuaie her from out her fathers Courte, accordyng as she should giue hym direction, and also to make himself partaker of her iourney, and to waite vpon her, till she had seen the end of her determination.

Pedro perceiuyng with what vehemencie his Ladie and Mistresse had made request vnto hym, albeeit he sawe many perilles and doubtes, depending in her pretence notwithstandyng, gaue his consent to be at her disposition, promisyng her to further her with his best aduice, and to bee readie to obeye whatsoeuer she would please to commaunde him. The match beyng thus agreed vpon, and all thynges prepared in a readinesse for their departure: It happened there was a Gallie of Constantinople, readie to departe, whiche Pedro vnderstandyng came to the Captaine, desiryng him to haue passage for hymself, and for a poore Maide that was his Sister, whiche were bounde to Constantinople vppon certaine vrgent affaires, to whiche request, the Captaine graunted, willyng hym to prepare aborde with all speede, because the Winde serued hym presently to departe.

Pedro now comming to his Mistres, and telling her how he had handeled the matter with the Captaine: she likyng very well of the deuise, disguisyng her self into very simple attire, stole awaie from out her fathers Courte, and came with Pedro, whom now she calleth Brother aborde the Gallie, where all thinges being in readinesse, and the winde seruyng very well, thei launched forthe with their Oares, and set saile, when thei were at the Sea, the Captaine of the Galleye takyng the vewe of Silla, perceiuyng her singular beautie, he was better pleased in beholdyng of her face, then in takyng

the

the height either of the Sunne or Starre, and thinkyng her by the homelinesse of her apparell, to be but some simple maiden, callyng her into his Cabin, he beganne to breake with her after the Sea fashion, desiryng her to vse his owne Cabin for her better ease: and duryng the tyme that she remained at the Sea, she should not want a bed, and then whisperyng softly in her eare he saied, that for want of a bedfellowe, he hym self would supplie that rome. Silla not being acquainted with any suche talke, blusshed for shame, but made hym no aunswere at all, my Captaine feelyng suche a bickeryng within himself, the like whereof he had neuer indured vpon the Sea: was like to be taken prisoner aboorde his owne Shippe, and forced to yeeld hymself a captiue without any Cannon shott, wherefore to salue all sores, and thinkyng it the readiest waie to speed, he began to breake with Silla in the waie of mariage, telling her how happie a voyage she had made, to fall into the likyng of suche a one as hymself was, who was able to keepe and maintaine her like a Gentlewoman, & for her sake would likewise take her brother into his fellowship, whom he would by some meanes prefarre in suche sorte, that bothe of them should haue good cause to thinke them selues thrise happie, she to light of suche a housband, and he to light of suche a brother. But Silla nothyng pleased with these prefermentes, desired hym to cease his talke, for that she did thinke her self in deede to be too vnworthie suche a one as he was, neither was she minded yet to marrie, and therefore desired hym to fixe his fancie vpon some that were better worthie then her self was, and that could better like of his curtesie then she could do: the Captaine seyng hymself thus refused, being in a great chafe, he saied as followeth.

Then seeyng you make so little accompte of my curtesie, proffered to one that is so farre vnworthie of it, from henceforthe I will vse the office of my authoritie, you shall knowe that I am the Captaine of this Shippe, and haue power to commaunde and dispose of thinges at my pleasure, and seyng you haue so scornfully reiected me to be your loiall housband, I will now take you by force, and vse you at my will, and so

long

long as it shall please me, will keepe you for mine owne store, there shall be no man able to defende you, nor yet to perswade me from that I haue determined. Silla with these wordes beyng stroke into a greate feare, did thinke it now too late, to rewe her rashe attempte, determined rather to dye with her owne handes, then to suffer her self to be abused in suche sorte, therefore she moste humbly desired the Captaine so muche as he could to saue her credite, and seyng that she must needes be at his will and disposition, that for that present he would depart, and suffer her till night, when in the darke he might take his pleasure, without any maner of suspition to the residue of his companie. The Captaine thinkyng now the goole to bee more then halfe wonne, was contented so farre to satisfie her request, and departed out leauyng her alone in his Cabin.

Silla, beeyng alone by her self, drue out her knife readie to strike her self to the harte, and fallyng vpon her knees, desired God to receiue her soule, as an acceptable sacrifice for her follies, whiche she had so wilfully committed, craueng pardon for her sinnes, and so forthe continuyng a long and pitifull reconciliation to GOD, in the middest whereof there sodainly fell a wonderfull storme, the terrour whereof was suche, that there was no man but did thinke the Seas would presently haue swallowed them, the Billowes so sodainly arose with the rage of the winde, that thei were al glad to fall to heauing out of water, for otherwise their feeble Gallie had neuer bin able to haue brooked the Seas, this storme continued all that daie and the next night, and thei beeyng driuen to put romer before the winde to keepe the Gallie a hed the Billowe, were driuen vppon the maine Shore, where the Gallie brake all to peeces, there was euery man prouiding to saue his owne life, some gate vpon Hatches, Boordes, and Casks, and were driuen with the waues to and fro, but the greatest nomber were drouned, amongest the whiche Pedro was one, but Silla her self beeyng in the Cabin as you haue heard, tooke holde of a Chest that was the Captaines, the whiche by the onely prouidence of GOD brought her safe to the Shore, the whiche when she had recouered, not knowyng what was become of

Pedro

Pedro her man, she deemed that bothe he and all the rest had been drouned, for that she sawe no bodie vppon the Shore but her self, wherefore, when she had a while made greate lamentations, complainyng her mishappes, she beganne in the ende to comforte her self with the hope, that she had to see her Apolonius, and found suche meanes that she brake open the Chest that brought her to land, wherin she found good store of coine, and sondrie suites of Apparell that were the Captaines, and now to preuent a nomber of iniuries, that might be proffered to a woman that was left in her case, she determined to leaue her owne Apparell, and to sorte her self into some of those suites, that beeyng taken for a man, she might passe through the Countrey in the better safetie, and as she chaunged her apparell, she thought it likewise conuenient to chaunge her name, wherefore not readily happenyng of any other, she called her self Siluio, by the name of her owne brother, whom you haue heard spoken of before.

In this maner she trauailed to Constantinople, where she inquired out the Pallace of the Duke Apolonius, and thinkyng her self now to be both fit and able to plaie the seruyng man, she presented her self to the Duke, crauyng his seruice, the Duke very willyng to giue succour vnto straungers, perceiuyng hym to be a proper smouge yong man, gaue hym entertainment: Silla thought her self now more then satisfied, for all the casualties that had happened vnto her in her Journey, that she might at her pleasure take but the vewe of the Duke Apolonius, and aboue the rest of his seruaunts was very diligent and attendaunt vppon hym, the whiche the Duke perceiuyng, began likewise to growe into good likyng with the diligence of his man, and therefore made hym one of his Chamber, who but Siluio then was most neate about hym, in helpyng of hym to make hym readie in a mornyng, in the setting of his ruffes, in the keeping of his Chamber, Siluio pleased his Maister so well, that aboue all the rest of his seruaunts about him, he had the greatest credite, and the Duke put him moste in trust.

At this very instaunt, there was remainyng in the Citie a

noble Dame a widowe, whose houſbande was but lately deceaſed, one of the nobleſt men that were in the partes of Grecia, who left his Ladie and wife large poſſeſſions and greate liuynges. This Ladies name was called Iulina, who beſides the aboundance of her wealth, and the greatneſſe of her reuenues, had likewiſe the ſoueraignetie of all the Dames of Conſtantinople for her beautie. To this Ladie Iulina, Apolonius became an earneſt ſuter, and accordyng to ỳ maner of woers, beſides faire woordes, ſorowfull ſighes, and piteous countenaunces, there muſt bee ſendyng of louyng letters, Chaines, Bracelettes, Brouches, Rynges, Tablets, Gemmes, Iuels, and preſentes I knowe not what: So my Duke, who in the tyme that he remained in the Ile of Cypres, had no ſkill at all in the arte of Loue, although it were more then half proffered vnto him, was now become a ſcholler in Loues Schoole, and had alreadie learned his firſt leſſon, that is, to ſpeake pitifully, to looke ruthfully, to promiſe largely, to ſerue diligently, and to pleaſe carefully: Now he was learnyng his ſeconde leſſon, that is to rewarde liberally, to giue bountifully, to preſent willingly, and to write louingly. Thus Apolonius was ſo buſied in his newe ſtudie, that I warrant you there was no man that could chalenge hym for plaiyng the truant, he followed his profeſſion with ſo good a will: And who muſt bee the meſſenger to carrie the tokens and letters to the Ladie Iulina, but Siluio his man, in hym the Duke repoſed his onely confidence, to goe betweene hym and his Ladie.

Now Gentlewomen, doe you think there could haue been a greater torment deuiſed, wherewith to afflicte the harte of Silla, then her ſelf to bee made the Inſtrument to worke her owne miſhapp, and to plaie the Atturney in a cauſe, that made ſo muche againſt her ſelf. But Silla altogether deſirous to pleaſe her Maiſter, cared notiyng at all to offend her ſelf, followed his buſineſſe with ſo good a will, as if it had been in her owne preferment.

Iulina now hauyng many tymes, taken the gaze of this yong youth Siluio, perceiuyng hym to bee of ſuche excellent perfecte grace, was ſo intangled with the often ſight of this

sweete temptation, that she fell into as greate a likyng with the man, as the Maister was with her self: And on a tyme Siluio beyng sent from his Maister, with a message to the Ladie Iulina, as he beganne very earnestly to solicet in his Maisters behalfe, Iulina interruptyng hym in his tale, saied: Siluio it is enough that you haue saied for your Maister, from henceforth either speake for your self, or saie nothyng at all. Silla abashed to heare these wordes, began in her minde to accuse the blindnesse of Loue, that Iulina neglecting the good will of so noble a Duke, would preferre her loue vnto suche a one, as Nature it self had denaied to recompence her likyng.

And now for a tyme, leauyng matters dependyng as you haue heard, it fel out that the right Siluio in deede (whom you haue heard spoken of before, the brother of Silla,) was come to his Fathers Courte into the Ile of Cypres, where vnderstanding, that his sister was departed, in maner as you haue heard coniectured, that the very occasion did proceed of some liking had betweene Pedro her man (that was mylling with her) and her self, but Siluio who loued his sister, as dearly as his owne life, and the rather for that as she was his naturall sister, bothe by Father and Mother, so the one of them was so like the other, in countenaunce and fauour, that there was no man able to descerne the one from the other by their faces, sauyng by their apparell the one beyng a man, the other a woman.

Siluio therefore vowed to his Father, not onely to seeke out his sister Silla, but also to reuenge the villanie, whiche he conceiued in Sedro, for the carryng awaie of his sister, and thus departyng, hauyng trauailed through many Cities and Townes, without hearyng any maner of newes, of those he went to seeke for, at the last he arriued at Constantinople, where as he was walking in an euenyng for his owne recreation, on a pleasaunt greene parde, without the walles of the Citie, he fortuned to meete with the Ladie Iulina, who likewise had been abroade to take the aire, and as she sodainly cast her eyes vppon Siluio, thinkyng hym to bee her olde acquaintaunce, by reason they were so like one an other, as you haue heard before, saied vnto hym, Sir Siluio, if your haste be not the

greater, I praie you let me haue a little talke with you, seyng I haue so luckely met you in this place.

Siluio wonderyng to heare hymself so rightly named, beeyng but a straunger, not of aboue two daies continuaunce in the Citie, very courteously came towardes her, desirous to heare what she would saie.

Iulina commaunding her traine something to stand backe, saied as followeth. Seyng my good will and freendly loue, hath been the onely cause to make me so prodigal to offer, that I see is so lightly reiected, it maketh me to thinke, that men be of this condition, rather to desire those thinges, whiche thei can not come by, then to esteeme or value of that, whiche both largely and liberally is offered vnto them, but if the liberalitie of my proffer, hath made to seme lesse the value of the thing that I ment to present, it is but in your owne cõceipt, considering how many noble men there hath been here before, and be yet at this present, whiche hath bothe serued, sued, and moste humbly intreated, to attaine to that, whiche to you of my self, I haue freely offred, and I perceiue is dispised, or at the least very lightly regarded.

Siluio wonderyng at these woordes, but more amazed that she could so rightly call hym by his name, could not tell what to make of her speeches, assuring hym self that she was deceiued, and did mistake hym, did thinke notwithstandyng, it had been a poinct of greate simplicitie, if he should forsake that, whiche Fortune had so fauourably proffered vnto hym, perceiuyng by her traine, that she was some Ladie of greate honour, and vewing the perfection of her beautie, and the excellencie of her grace and countenaunce, did thinke it vnpossible that she should be despised, and therefore aunswered thus.

Madame, if before this tyme, I haue seemed to forget my self, in neglecting your courtesie whiche so liberally you haue ment vnto me: please it you to pardon what is past, and from this daie forwardes, Siluio remaineth readie prest to make suche reasonable amendes, as his abilitie may any waies permit, or as it shall please you to commaunde.

Iulina the gladdest woman that might bee, to heare these

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ioyfull newes, saied: Then my Siluio see you faile not to Morowe at night to suppe with me at my owne house, where I will discourse farther with you, what amendes you shal make me, to whiche request Siluio gaue his glad consent, and thus thei departed very well pleased. And as Iulina did thinke the tyme very long, till she had reapt the fruite of her desire: So Siluio he wisht for Harueſt, before Corne could growe., thinkyng the tyme as long, till he sawe how matters would fall out, but not knowyng what Ladie she might bee, he presently (before Iulina was out of sight) demaunded of one that was walkyng by what she was, and how she was called, who satisfied Siluio in euery poinct, and also in what parte of the toune her house did stande, whereby he might enquire it out.

Siluio thus departing to his lodging, passed the night with very vnquiet sleapes, and the next Morning his mynd ranne so muche of his Supper, that he neuer cared, neither for his Breakfast nor Dinner, and the daie to his seemyng passed awaie so slowly, that he had thought the statelie Steedes had been tired, to drawe the Chariot of the Sunne, or els some other Iosua had commaunded them againe to stande, and wished that Phaeton had been there with a whippe.

Iulina on the other side, she had thought the Clocke setter had plaied the knaue, the daie came no faster forwardes, but sixe a clocke beyng once stroken, recouered comforte to bothe parties: and Siluio hastening himself to the Pallace of Iulina, where by her he was frendly welcomed, and a sumpteous supper beeyng made readie, furnished with sondrie sortes of delicate dishes, thei satte them doune, passyng the Supper tyme with amourous lookes, louyng countenaunces, and secrete glaunces conueighed from the one to the other, whiche did better satisfie them, then the feedyng of their daintie dishes.

Supper tyme beeyng thus spent, Iulina did thinke it very vnfitly, if she should tourne Siluio to goe seeke his lodging in an euenyng, desired him therefore, that he would take a bedde in her house for that night, and bryngyng hym vp into a faire Chamber, that was very richly furnished, she found such meanes, that when all the rest of her houshoulde seruauntes were

a bedde and quiet, she came her self to beare Siluio companie, where concludyng vpon conditions, that were in question betweene them, thei passed the night with suche ioy and contentation, as might in that conuenient tyme bee wished for, but onely that Iulina, feedyng too muche of some one dishe about the rest, receiued a surfett, whereof she could not bee cured in fourtie weekes after, a naturall inclination in all Women whiche are subiect to longyng, and want the reason to vse a moderation in their diet: but the mornyng approching, Iulina tooke her leaue, and conueighed her self into her owne chamber, and when it was faire date light, Siluio makyng hymself readie, departed likewise about his affaires in the Toune, debatyng with hymself how thynges had happened, being well assured that Iulina had mistaken him, and therefore for feare of further euilles, determined to come no more there, but tooke his iourney towardes other places in the partes of Grecia, to see if he could learne any tidynges of his sister Silla.

The Duke Apolonius hauing made a long suite, and neuer a whit the nerer of his purpose, came to Iulina, craue her direct aunswere, either to accept of him, and of suche conditions as he proffered vnto her, or els to giue him his last farewell.

Iulina, as you haue heard, had taken an earnest penie of an other, whom she had thought had been Siluio the Dukes mã, was at a controuersie in her self, what she might do, one while she thought, seyng her occasion serued so fit, to craue the Dukes good will, for the maryng of his man, then againe, she could not tell what displeasure the Duke would conceiue, in that she should seeme to preferre his man before hymself, did thinke it therefore best to conceale the matter, till she might speake with Siluio, to vse his opinio how these matters should be handled, & hereupon resoluyng her self, desiryng the Duke to pardon her speeches, saied as followeth.

Sir Duke, for that from this tyme forwardes I am no longer of my self, hauing giuen my full power and authoritie ouer to an other, whose wife I now remaine by faithfull vow and promise: And albeeit, I knowe the worlde will wonder when thei shall vnderstande the fondnesse of my choyce, yet I

trust

truſt you your ſelf will nothyng deſlike with me, ſithe I haue ment no other thing, then the ſatiſfiyng of mine owne contentation and likyng.

The Duke hearyng theſe woꝛdes, aunſwered: Madame, I muſt then content my ſelf, although againſt my will, hauyng the Lawe in your owne handes, to like of whom you liſt, and to make choiſe where it pleaſeth you.

Iulina giuyng the Duke greate thankes, that would content himſelf with ſuche pacience, deſired him likewiſe, to giue his free conſent and good wil, to the partie whom ſhe had choſen to be her houſbande.

Naie ſurely Madame (q the Duke) I will neuer giue my conſent, that any other man ſhall enioye you then my ſelf, I haue made too greate accompt of you, then ſo lightly to paſſe you awaie with my good will: But ſeyng it lieth not in me to let you, hauyng (as you ſaie) made your owne choiſe, ſo from hence foꝛwardes I leaue you to your owne likyng, alwaies willyng you well, and thus will take my leaue.

The Duke departed towardes his owne houſe very ſoꝛrowfull, that Iulina had thus ſerued hym, but in the meane ſpace that the Duke had remained in the houſe of Iulina, ſome of his ſeruauntes fell into talke and conference, with the ſeruaunts of Iulina, where debatyng betweene them, of the likelihood of the Mariage, betwéene the Duke and the Ladie, one of the ſeruantes of Iulina ſaied: that he neuer ſawe his Ladie and Miſtres, vſe ſo good countenaunce to the Duke hymſelf, as ſhe had doen to Siluio his man, and began to repoꝛte with what familiaritie and courteſie, ſhe had receiued hym, feaſted hym, and lodged hym, and that in his opinion, Siluio was like to ſpeede beſoꝛe the Duke, oꝛ any other that were ſuters.

This tale was quickly bꝛought to the Duke himſelf, who makyng better enquirie in the matter, found it to be true that was repoꝛted, and better conſideryng of the woꝛdes, whiche Iulina had vſed towardes hymſelf, was very well aſſured that it could bee no other then his owne man, that had thꝛuſt his Noſe ſo farre out of ioynt, wherefoꝛe without any further reſpect, cauſed hym to be thꝛuſt into a Dongeon, where he was

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kept prisoner, in a very pitifull plight.

Poore Siluio, hauyng gott intelligence by some of his fellowes, what was the cause that the Duke his Maister did beare suche displeasure vnto hym, deuised all the meanes he could, as well by meditation by his fellowes, as otherwise by petitions, and supplication to the Duke, that he would suspende his Judgement, til perfect proofe were had in the matter, and then if any maner of thyng did fall out against hym, wherby the Duke had cause to take any greefe, he would confesse hymself worthie not onely of imprisonment, but also of moste vile and shamefull death: with these petitions he daiely plied the Duke, but all in vaine, for the Duke thought he had made so good proofe, that he was throughly confirmed in his opinion against his man.

But the Ladie Iulina, wonderyng what made Siluio, that he was so slacke in his visitation, and why he absented himself so long from her presence, beganne to thinke that all was not well, but in the ende, perceiuyng no decoction of her former surfette, receiued as you haue heard, and findyng in her self, an vnwonted swellyng in her beallie, assuryng her self to bee with childe, fearyng to become quite banckroute of her honour, did thinke it more then tyme to seeke out a Father, and made suche secret searche, and diligent enquirie, that she learned the truth how Siluio was kept in prison, by the Duke his Maister, and mindyng to finde a present remedie, as well for the loue she bare to Siluio, as for the maintenaunce of her credite and estimation, she speedily hasted to the Pallace of the Duke, to whom she saied as followeth.

Sir Duke, it maie bee that you will thinke my commyng to your house in this sorte, doeth somethyng passe the limites of modestie, the whiche I protest before GOD, proceaded of this desire, that the worlde should knowe, how iustly I seeke meanes to maintaine my honour, but to the ende I seeme not tedious with prolixitie of woordes, nor to vse other then direct circumstaunces, knowe sir, that the loue I beare to my onely beloued Siluio, whom I doe esteeme more then all the Jewelles in the world, whose personage I regard more then

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my owne life, is the onely cause of my attempted iourney, beseechyng you, that all the whole displeasure, whiche I vnderstand you haue conceiued against hym, maie be imputed vnto my charge, & that it would please you louyngly to deale with him, whom of my self I haue chosen rather for the satisfaction of mine honest liking, then for the vaine preheminences or honourable dignities looked after by ambicious myndes.

The Duke hauyng heard this discourse, caused Siluio presently to be sent for, and to be brought before hym, to whom he saied: Had it not been sufficient for thee, when I had reposed my self in thy fidelitie, and the trustinesse of thy seruice, that thou shouldest so traiterously deale with me, but since that time haste not spared, still to abuse me with so many forgeries, and periured protestations, not onely hatefull vnto me, whose simplicitie thou thinkest to bee suche, that by the plotte of thy pleasaunt tongue, thou wouldest make me beleeue a manifest vntrothe, but moste habominable bee thy doynges in the presence and sight of God, that hast not spared to blaspheeme his holy name, by callyng hym to bee a witnesse to maintaine thy leasynges, and so detestably wouldest forsweare thy self, in a matter that is so openly knowne.

Vnto Siluio whose innocencie was suche, þ he might lawfully sweare, seing Iulina to be there in place, aunswered thus.

Moste noble Duke, well vnderstandyng your conceiued greefe, most humbly I beseeche you pacientlye to heare my excuse, not mindyng thereby to aggrauate or heape vp your wrathe and displeasure, protestyng before God, that there is nothyng in the worlde, whiche I regarde so muche, or doe esteeme so deare, as your good grace and fauour, but desirous that your grace should know my innocencie, and to cleare my self of suche impositions, wherewith I knowe I am wrongfully accused, whiche as I vnderstande should be in the practising of the Ladie Iulina, who standeth here in place, whose acquitance for my better discharge, now I most humbly craue, protesting before the almightie God, that neither in thought, worde, nor deede, I haue not otherwise vsed my self, then accordyng to the bonde and ductie of a seruaunt, that is bothe

willyng and desirous, to further his Maisters sutes, which if I haue otherwise saied then that is true, you Madame Iulina, who can very well deside the depthes of all this doubt, I most humbly beseeche you to certifie a troth, if I haue in any thing missaied, or haue otherwise spoken then is right and iust.

Iulina hauing heard this discourse which Siluio had made, perceiuyng that he stoode in great awe of the Dukes displeasure, aunswered thus: Thinke not my Siluio, that my commyng hether is to accuse you of any misdemeanour towards your Maister, so I doe not denaie, but in al suche Imbassages wherein towardes me you haue been imployed, you haue vsed the office of a faithfull and trustie messenger, neither am I ashamed to confesse, that the first day that mine eyes did behold the singuler behauiour, the notable curtesie, and other innumerable giftes wherewith my Siluio is endued, but that beyonde all measure my harte was so inflamed, that impossible it was for me, to quenche the feruent loue, or extinguishe the least part of my conceiued torment, before I had bewraied the same vnto hym, and of my owne motion, craued his promised faithe and loialtie of marriage, and now is the tyme to manifest the same vnto the worlde, whiche hath been doen before God, and betweene our selues: knowyng that it is not needefull, to keepe secret that, whiche is neither euill doen, nor hurtfull to any persone, therefore (as I saied before) Siluio is my housbande by plited faithe, whom I hope to obtaine without offence, or displeasure of any one, trusting that there is no mã, that will so farre forget hymself, as to restraine that, whiche God hath left at libertie for euery wight, or that will seeke by crueltie, to force Ladies to marrie otherwise, then accordyng to their owne likyng. Feare not then my Siluio to keepe your faith and promise, whiche you haue made vnto me, and as for the rest: I doubt not thynges will so fall out, as you shall haue no maner of cause to complaine.

Siluio amased to heare these woordes, for that Iulina by her speeche, seemed to confirme that, whiche he most of all desired to be quite of, saied: Who would haue thought that a Ladie of so greate honour and reputation, would her self bee the Embassadour,

ballādour, of a thyng so preiudiciall, and vncomely for her estate, what plighted promises be these whiche be spoken of: altogether ignorant vnto me, whiche if it be otherwise then I haue saied, you Sacred Gods consume me straight with flashyng flames of fire. But what woordes might I vse to giue credite to the truth, and innocencie of my cause? Ah Madame Iulina, I desire no other testimonie, then your owne honestie and vertue, thinkyng that you will not so muche blemishe the brightnesse of your honour, knowyng that a woman is or should be, the Image of curtesie, continencie, and shamefastnesse, from the whiche so soone as she stoopeth, and leaueth the office of her duetie and modestie, besides the degraduation of her honour, she thrusteth her self into the pitt of perpetuall infamie, and as I can not thinke you would so farre forget your self, by the refusall of a noble duke, to dimme the light of your renowne and glorie, whiche hetherto you haue maintained, amongest the best and noblest Ladies, by such a one as I know my self to be, too farre vnworthie your degree and callyng, so most humbly I beseeche you to confesse a trothe, whereto tendeth those vowes and promises you speake of, whiche spœches bee so obscure vnto me, as I knowe not for my life how I might vnderstande them.

Iulina somethyng nipped with these speeches saied, and what is the matter that now you make so little accoumpt of your Iulina, that beeyng my housbande in deede, haue the face to denay me, to whom thou art contracted by so many solemne othes: what arte thou ashamed to haue me to thy wife? how muche oughtest thou rather to bee ashamed to breake thy promised faithe, and to haue despised the holie and dreadfull name of GOD, but that tyme constraineth me to laie open that, whiche shame rather willeth I should dissemble and keepe secret, behold me then here Siluio whom thou hast gotten with childe, who if thou be of suche honestie, as I trust for al this I shall finde, then the thing is doen without preiudice, or any hurte to my conscience, considerying that by the professed faithe, thou diddest accoumpt me for thy wife, and I receiued thee for my spouse and loyall housbande, swearing by the

almighty God, that no other then you haue made the cõquest and triumphe of my chastitie, whereof I craue no other witnesse then your self, and myne owne conscience.

I praie you Gentlewomen, was not this a foule ouersight of Iulina, that would so precisely sweare so great an othe, that she was gotten with childe by one, that was altogether vnfurnisht with implementes for suche a tourne. For Gods loue take heede, and let this be an example to you, when you bee with childe, how you sweare who is the father, before you haue had good proofe and knowledge of the partie, for men bee so subtill and full of sleight, that God knoweth a woman maie quickly be deceiued.

But now to retourne to our Siluio, who hearyng an othe sworne so deuinely that he had gotten a woman with childe, was like to beleeue that it had bin true in very deede, but remembryng his owne impediment, thought it impossible that he should commit suche an acte, and therefore halfe in a chafe, he saied. What lawe is able to restraine the foolishe indiscretion of a wouan, that peeldeth her self to her owne desires, what shame is able to bridle or withdrawe her from her mynd and madnesse, or with what snaffell is it possible to holde her backe, from the execution of her filthinesse, but what abhomination is this, that a Ladie of such a house should so forget the greatnesse of her estate, the aliaunce whereof she is descended, the nobilitie of her deceased housbande, and maketh no conscience to shame and slaunder her self, with suche a one a I am, being so farre vnfit and vnseemely for her degree, but how horrible is it to heare the name of God so defased, that wee make no more accompt, but for the maintenaunce of our mischifes, we feare no whit at all to forsweare his holy name, as though he were not in all his dealinges moste righteous true and iuste, and will not onely laie open our leasinges to the worlde, but will likewise punishe the same with moste sharpe and bitter scourges.

Iulina, not able to indure hym to proceede any farther in his Sermon, was alreadie surprised with a vehement greefe, began bitterly to crie out vtteryng these speeches followyng.

Alas

Alas, is it possible that the soueraigne iustice of God, can abide a mischiefe so greate and cursed, why maie I not now suffer death, rather then the infamie whiche I see to wander before myne eyes. O happie and more then right happie had I bin, if inconstant fortune had not deuised this treason where in I am surprised and caught, am I thus become to be intangled with snares, and in the handes of hym, who inioying the spoyles of my honour, will openly depriue me of my fame, by making me a common fable to all posteritie in time to come: ah Traitour and discourtious wretche, is this the recompence of the honest and firme amitie which I haue borne thee, wherin haue I deserued this discourtesie, by louing thee more then thou art able to deserue, is it I arrant theefe is it I, vppon whom thou thinkest to worke thy mischiues, dost thou think me no better worthe, but that thou maiest prodigally waste my honour at thy pleasure, diddest thou dare to aduenture vppon me, hauyng thy conscience wounded with so deadly a treason: ah vnhappie and aboue all other most vnhappie, that haue so charely preserued myne honour, and now am made a praie to satisfie a yong mans lust, that hath coueted nothyng but the spoyle of my chastitie and good name.

Here withall the teares so gushed doune her cheekes, that she was not able to open her mouth to vse any farther speech.

The Duke who stoode by all this while, and heard this whole discourse, was wonderfully mooued with compassion towardes Iulina, knowyng that from her infancie she had euer so honourably vsed her self, that there was no man able to detect her of any misdemeanour, other wise then beseemed a Ladie of her estate, wherefore beyng fully resolued that Siluio his man had committed this villanie against her, in a greate furie drawyng his Rapier he saied vnto Siluio.

How canst thou (arrant theefe) shewe thy self so cruell and careleste to suche as doe thee honour, hast thou so little regard of suche a noble Ladie, as humbleth her self to suche a villaine as thou art, who without any respecte either of her renowne or noble estate, canst be content to seeke the wracke and vtter ruine of her honour, but frame thy self to make suche satisfac-

tion as she requireth, although I knowe vnworthie wretche, that thou art not able to make her the least parte of amendes, or I sweare by God, that thou shalt not escape ỹ death whiche I will minister to thee with my owne handes, and therefore aduise thee well what thou doest.

Siluio hauyng heard this sharpe sentence, fell doune on his knees before the Duke crauyng for mercie, desiryng that he might be suffered to speake with the Ladie Iulina aparte, promising to satisfie her, accordyng to her owne contentation.

Well (qd the Duke) I take thy worde, and therewith all I aduise thee that thou performe thy promise, or otherwise I protest before God, I will make thee suche an example to the world, that all Traitours shall tremble for feare, how thei doe seeke the dishonouryng of Ladies.

But now Iulina had conceiued so great greefe against Siluio, that there was muche adoe, to perswade her to talke with hym, but remembryng her owne case, desirous to heare what excuse he could make, in ỹ ende she agreed, and being brought into a place seuerally by them selues, Siluio beganne with a piteous voyce to saie as followeth.

I knowe not Madame, of whom I might make complaint, whether of you or of my self, or rather of Fortune, whiche hath conducted and brought vs bothe into so great aduersitie, I see that you receiue greate wrong, and I am condemned against all right, you in perrill to abide the hyute of spightfull tongues, and I in daunger to loose the thyng that I most desire: and although I could alledge many reasons to proue my saiynges true, yet I referre my self, to the experience and bountie of your mynde. And here with all loosyng his garmentes doune to his stomacke, and shewed Iulina his breastes and pretie teates, surmountyng farre the whitnesse of Snowe it self, saiyng: Loe Madame, behold here the partie whom you haue chalenged to bee the father of your childe, see I am a woman the daughter of a noble Duke, who onely for the loue of hym, whom you so lightly haue shaken of, haue forsaken my Father, abandoned my Countrey, and in maner as you see am become a seruing man, satisfiyng my self, but with

the

the only sight of my Apolonius, and now Madame, if my passion were not vehement, & my tormentes without cõparison, I would wishe that my fained greefes might bee laughed to scorne, & my dissembled paines to bee rewarded with floutes. But my loue beyng pure, my trauaile continuall, & my greefes endlesse, I trust Madame you will not onely excuse me of crime, but also pitie my destresse, the which I protest I would still haue kept secrete, if my fortune would so haue permitted.

Iulina did now think her selfe to be in a worse case then euer she was before, for now she knew not whom to chalenge to be the father of her child: wherefore, when she had told the Duke the very certantie of the discourse, which Siluio had made vnto her, she departed to her owne house, with suche greefe & sorrowe, that she purposed neuer to come out of her owne doores againe aliue, to be a wonder & mocking stocke to the worlde.

But ỳ Duke more amased, to heare this straũge discourse of Siluio came vnto him, whõ when he had vewed with better consideration, perceiued in deede that it was Silla the daughter of Duke Pontus, and imbracing her in his armes, he said.

Oh the braunche of all vertue, and the flowre of curtesie it selfe, pardon me I beseeche you of all suche discourtesies, as I haue ignorantly committed towardes you: desiryng you that without farther memorie of auncient greefes, you wil accept of me, who is more ioyfull and better cõtented with your presence, then if the whole worlde were at my commaundement. Where hath there euer been founde suche liberalitie in a Louer, whiche hauyng been trained vp and nourished amongest the delicacies and banquettes of the Courte, accompanied with traines of many faire and noble Ladies liuyng in pleasure, and in the middest of delightes, would so prodigally aduenture your selfe, neither fearing mishapps, nor misliking to take suche paines, as I knowe you haue not been accustomed vnto. O liberalitie neuer heard of before. O facte that can neuer be sufficiently rewarded. O true Loue most pure and vnfained: Here with all sendyng for the most artificiall woorkmen, he prouided for her sondrie sutes of sumpteous Apparell, and the Marriage daie appointed, whiche was celebrated

with

with greate triumphe, through the whole Citie of Constantinople, euery one praising the nobleneſſe of the Duke, but ſo many as did behold the excellent beautie of Silla, gaue her the praiſe aboue all the reſt of the Ladies in the troupe.

The matter ſeemed ſo wonderfull and ſtraunge, that the bruite was ſpreade throughout all the partes of Grecia, in ſo muche that it came to the hearyng of Siluio, who as you haue heard, remained in thoſe partes to enquire of his ſiſter, he being the gladdeſt man in the worlde, haſted to Conſtantinople, where commyng to his Siſter he was ioyfully receiued, and moſte louingly welcomed, and entertained of the Duke his brother in Lawe. After he had remained there two or three dayes, the Duke reuealed vnto Siluio, the whole diſcourſe how it happened, betweene his ſiſter and the Ladie Iulina, and how his ſiſter was chalenged, for gettyng a woman with childe: Siluio bluſhyng with theſe wordes, was ſtriken with great remorſe to make Iulina amendes, vnderſtandyng her to be a noble Ladie, and was left defamed to the worlde through his default, he therefore bewaied the whole circumſtaunce to the Duke, whereof ỹ Duke being very ioyful, immediatly repaired with Siluio to the houſe of Iulina, whom thei founde in her Chamber, in greate lamentation and mournyng. To whom the Duke ſaied: take courage Madame, for beholde here a Gentleman, that will not ſticke, both to father your child, and to take you for his wife, no inferiour perſon, but the ſonne and heire of a noble Duke, worthie of your eſtate and dignitie.

Iulina ſeing Siluio in place, did know very well that he was the father of her childe, and was ſo rauiſhed with ioye, that ſhe knewe not whether ſhe were awake, or in ſome dreame. Siluio imbracyng her in his armes, craueng forgiueneſſe of all that paſt: concluded with her the mariage daie, which was preſently accompliſhed with greate ioye, and contentation to al parties: And thus Siluio hauyng attained a noble wife, and Silla his ſiſter her deſired houſbande, thei paſſed the reſidue of their daies with ſuche delight, as thoſe that haue accompliſhed the perfection of their felicities.

FINIS.

¶ The

Of Nicander and Lucilla.

The Argument of the third Historie.

¶ Lucilla, *a yong maiden, endued with singuler beautie, for want of a conuent dowrie, was restrained from maryng her beloued* Nicander, *in the ende, through the greate magnificence of the courteous yong prince* Don Hercules, *the onely sonne and heire of* Alfonso *duke of Ferrara she was releeued with the somme of 2000. Crounes, the whiche money beyng receiued by the father of* Nicander *the mariage was performed, to the greate contentation of the noble yong prince, but especially to the twoo yong louers,* Nicander *and* Lucilla.

IN the tyme that Alfonso firste of that name, and third Duke of Ferrara goutrned that state, there was in the Citee of Ferrara, a gentle yong gentlewoman, named Lucilla, borne of a noble Familie, but by the frowardnesse of blind Fortune, reduced to great pouertie, then her vertues did deserue: whose beautie appeared to bee suche, in the prime and flower of her yeres, as it filled with meruaile, all those that caste their eyes vpon her. Of this Gentlewoman was feruently enamoured, a gallant yong Gentleman, whose name was Nicander, and in like sort borne of noble blood: And desired nothyng more, then to bee ioyned with her in Matrimonie. But she beyng, as it is saied, poore, though of noble Parentage, and endued with singular vertues: The Father of the yong Gentleman disdained her, who (as for the moste part, we see old men, naturally enclined to couetise) regarding rather the wealth that their daughters in lawe, are to bryng into their families, then either birthe, ver-

tue, or giftes of the minde, could in nowise bee perswaded, or intreated to content his sonne in that behalf, and to suffer him to enioye his Loue, by takyng her to wife: alledgyng that the first thing that was to be considered in mariage, was the dowrie, and the woman. For that the vertues of the women, dooe not enriche the houses wherein thei came (saied he) but the qualitie of goodes and wealthe, that thei brought with them.

The coueteous disposition of the father of Nicander, was cause that these two yong folke languished in miserable loue: For although their flames were of equall force and heate, yet the yong gentlewoman beyng of a verie honest minde, nor the yong gentleman, neuer thinking vpō any other meanes then honestly to enioye his desire, without touche or breache of her honor: and the obstinate wilfulnesse of the old man beyng cast, as a barre or blocke, betweene the vnitie and concorde of their twoo mindes: thei liued in greate tormente, eche consumyng, and as it wer melting awaie with desire, for loue of eche other Whilest their mutuall loue continued in this sorte eche daie, with lesse hope then other, through the obstinacie of the olde carle, it happened that Don Hercules the Dukes onely sonne and heire, beyng then in the freshest time of his youth, passing by the streate where this gentlewoman dwelt, sawe her standing in her dooze, apparailed in White, whiche kinde of attire encreased greatly her naturall beautie. And considering somwhat curiouslie, the comelinesse and excellencie of her personage, together with her perfectiō of beautie, he receiued with suche force into his imagination, the firste impression of them bothe, that from thence forward, her liuely Image semed continuallie to bee before his eyes: by the consideration whereof he grewe by degrees, to conceiue so vehement a desire, to enioye the singularitie whiche he sawe in her, that he thought it impossible for him to liue, if he did not attaine it.

And ofte times discoursyng to himself thereof, he would saie, what iniurie hath Fortune dooen vnto this faire Gentlewoman, that as Nature hath been liberall, in bestowyng of beautie vpon her, meete for any greate Princes, she hath not likewise caused her to be borne of some king or mightie prince

whiche

whiche if she were, I would neuer cease, till I had founde the meanes to gett her to bee my wife, and so enioye her as myne owne, with the safetie of her honour, and with the satisfaction and contentment of my Father.

But in the ende, although he sawe her degree, to bee farre vnequall to his, to wishe, or to procure any suche matche: Yet ceased he not by all the meanes he could, to win her good will, and now by one deuise, and now by an other, to induce her to loue him, and to yeeld to his feruent desire. But all in vaine. For where many others would haue taken it, for a great good Fortune, that suche a Prince, should haue fallen in loue with thē: Lucilla considering the baseneſſe of her degree, in respect of the high estate of her newe Louer, reputed it to be a greate mishap vnto her, as she that considered, that she could not nourishe, or entertaine any suche Loue, but with the harme and preiudice of her honour. Besides that, she feared least that Nicander should once perceiue, that this yong Prince hunted after that haūt, he would forsake her, for feare of farther displeasure, wherefore to auoide bothe inconueniences, whereas till then, she was wonte to shewe her self, sometime at the Doore, sometime at the Windowes, she now retired her self in suche sort, that she could neuer be seen but on the Sundaies and holie daies, as she went to a little Churche, nere adioinyng to the house. Wherefore Nicander not a little meruailyng, and greatlie troubled in spirite, fearing that Lucilla (wauering as women vse to doe) had forsaken him, and turned her affection els where: as one full of gelousie and greef, for fault of better comforte, he would watche his times, and followe her to that Churche: there to feede his fancie with a looke or twoo, which yet amid his miserie, he seemed to esteeme as a releef, without the whiche he could not liue. Finallie, not beeyng able to endure those tormentes, that this absence and straungeneſſe of his Ladie caused him to feele: he sent vnto her a conueniente messenger with a letter, conteining this effecte.

The Birde whiche long hath liued in pleasant feeld,
Esteemes no whit his Cage of wreathed golde:

The dulced note, wherewith he pearst the Skie,
For greef of minde, he can not then vnfolde.
Yet liues he still, but better were to die,
More worse then death, euen suche a life haue I.

The Turtle true, of his deceased mate,
Bewailes the want, he reakes no more of blisse:
The swellyng Swanne, doeth hardly brooke the place,
When he his beste beloued birde doeth misse.
Suche is my ioye, Nicander needes must die,
Lucilla doeth his wonted presence flie.

How can I liue, that double death possesse,
How should I ioye, that drenched am in thrall:
What foode maie feede, or beare a pleasaunt taste,
Where as the harte, lies bathed still in Gall.
If this be life, then life be farre from me,
And welcome death, to set Nicander free.

What cause my deare, hath thy Nicander wrought,
That makes thee shunne, in whom thou shouldst delight:
What moues thy minde, to mewe thee vp so close,
And keepe thee from, thy beste beloued sight.
If I offended haue, then charge me when and how,
Nicander shall hym cleare, or to thy mercie bow.

If no offence, but fonde conceipt hath taken holde,
Condempne hym not, that shewes his giltlesse hande:
Who hetherto hath neuer ment the thyng,
That iustly might, against your honour stande.
If giltie I, I aske no other grace,
Giue doome of Death, and doe my suite deface.

I saie no more, but as I doe deserue,
So shewe the fruite, of my deserued hire:
Seme not so straunge, vnto thy faithfull freende,
Whose absence setts, my scorchyng harte on fire.
But as my loue to thee, no tongue can tell,

Esteeme the like of me, and so farewell.

Thine owne Nicander.

The yong Gentlewoman who had fixed all her thoughtes, and setled all the contentmentes of her harte, onely vpon Nicander, neither desiryng any thing in the worlde, so muche as to please and content hym: Felt an intollerable perplexitie of minde, in that she sawe him greeue thus, at her late straungeneſſe, and yet thought it better that he should complaine, then come by any knowledge of the loue, that Don Hercules did beare her, wherefore hidyng from hym the matter, replied in this sorte.

The Birde whiche is restrainde,
Of former hartes delight:
I must confesse, twixt life and death,
Doeth alwaie combate fight.

So doeth the harte compelled,
By heste of Parentes will:
Obaye for feare, yet forste by loue,
Continues constant still.

No absence by consent,
My deare Nicander *I:*
Haue wrought to worke thy wo from thee,
Like Cresled *falce to flie.*

Ne shall I liue to loathe,
What maie content thy minde:
Hap life or death, as true as Steele,
Thou shalt Lucilla *finde.*

Thy eares shall neuer heare,
Nor eyes shall neuer see:
That any Wight shall reape the fruite,
Whiche planted was for thee.

Then frame thyself my deare,

To take againſt thy will:
Our abſence in good part till tyme,
Maie better happe fulfill.

And therewithall receiue,
This pledge to cure thy paine:
My harte is thine, preſerue it well,
Till wee twoo meete againe.

Euer thine Lucilla.

This ſweete aunſwere mitigated not a little, the moode of the yong Gentleman, and ſo he framed himſelf the beſte he could, to tollerate the abſence of his Lucilla. On the other ſide Don Hercules, who in like maner founde himſelf depriued, of the ſight of that yong Ladie, whom he loued extreamely, was verie muche diſcontented, and perceiuing that neither meſſages, nor faire offers, with large giftes ſent vnto her, whereof neuer any were accepted, could once moue her to ſhewe her ſelf courteous vnto him, of ſo muche as a looke: And conſidering the pouertie, wherein her mother liued, now in her latter yeres, beganne to imagine that it would bee muche eaſier for hym, by offeryng her liberally, wherewithall to Marrie her daughter, to perſwade her to yeeld her into his handes, then to winne the yong Gentlewoman to his deſire.

Wherefore hauyng ſent a fit perſone to Lucillas Mother, to let her vnderſtande, that if ſhe would bee content, that the yong Prince might enioye her daughter, he would giue her ſuche a dowrie in recompence of his pleaſure, that no Gentleman of what degree ſoeuer, ſhould for her pouertie refuſe to take her to wife: whereas if ſhe refuſed y' good offer, ſhe ſhould therby be conſtrained through neceſſitie, either to beſtowe her vpon ſome Artificer or Craftes man, or if ſhe would needes Marrie her to a gentleman, ſhe muſt giue her to ſome ſuche as was ſo poore, as that ſhe ſhould liue all the daies of her life in want and miſerie, the whiche in effect would bee nothing els, but to be cruell towardes her owne daughter, in barring that

good

good hap whiche he did offer, besides the fauour that he should be able to shew, in furthering her mariage, to bothe their endeles comfortes. The mother beeyng often sollicited, and sommoned to this effect: and on the one side punished with pouertie, and on the other charged with yeres, bothe whiche pressed her verie muche, after diuers discourses made to and fro with her self, lastly she saied. And whereto ought I to haue regard, but to the wealth and profite of my daughter, whiche bothe she shall reape abondantly, if by ỹ giuyng her self vnto this yong Prince, he doeth bestowe vpon her that dowrie, whiche he hath promised. And although in doyng thereof there be some touch and spot to my daughters honor and mine, yet shall it be so recompensed with the benefite of her dowrie, that the profit will bee greater then the harme. And if therein be any offence, the blame thereof is not to be imputed vnto me, but vnto my euill Fortune, that hath brought me into this miserable necessitie. Besides that my daughter beyng now alreadie xviii. yeres of age, and of moste singular beautie, and my self alreadie so old, that from daie to daie, I maie looke to goe to my graue, I might happen to dye, and leaue her without any gouernemẽt or ouersight, and she stirred with those appetites, wherto yong folkes are enclined, through the frailtie of her sexe, and the pouertie wherein I shall leaue her, bee brought to yeeld her self into the handes of some suche one, as would not haue due regard vnto her calling, but bring her vnto the spoile. And after these and suche like discourses, sondrie times had with her self finallie, she sent him woorde, that if it would please him, she would gladlie speake with him her self: whiche he hauing vnderstoode, caused her to be brought one euenyng, into a place where thei twoo alone might talke, and there hauyng giuen her opportunitie, to saie what she would, thus she begaunne.

Sir, the weapons wherewith necessitie, and my pouertie hath assaulted me, haue been so sharpe and so pearcing, that although I haue indeuored al the waies I could deuise, to resist and defende my self frõ them, yet in th'ende I haue bin forced to yeeld, as vanquished & ouercome, and constrained to do that with my daughter, as to thinke of it onely I am so abashed,

that

that I dare not for shame lift vp mine eyes, to behold you. But for asmuche as no other thing hath perswaded me thereunto, but the desire whiche I haue to get her a dowrie, wherewith I may afterward bestowe her honestly, I beseche you to be content, to extende your liberalitie in suche sort, as she maie haue that large dowrie, whiche it hath pleased you to promise me.

Thereof I assure you (saied the Prince) and larger to then hath been spoken of to you beside: And also I will minister suche releef vnto you for your owne state, that you shall haue cause to giue me thankes for the same. Then replied the olde gentlewoman, and said: Since that you perceiue (sir) that no desire to make Marchaundize of my daughter, but extreame pouertie, wherevnto my froward Fortune hath brought me, doeth driue me to this exigent, I dooe likewise beseeche you, that you will come vnto my Daughter, at suche tyme as I shall deuise moste conuenient, with as muche regard vnto her credite as maie be possible. I will therein be ruled wholie by you (answered the yong Prince) and looke in what sorte you will appoinct me to come, so shall it be.

The firste thing then sir (q she) that I thinke requisite, is that you come alone without any companie, when I shall assigne you the time, so that the thing reste secret betweene you and me, and my daughter, and no occasion be giuen to publish it, whereby my daughter might leese her good name.

This courteous yong Prince was therewithall well content, and that beyng concluded and agreed vpon, she saied further, I knowe (sir) the honestie of my Daughter to bee suche, that if I should open my lippes vnto her, of any suche matter, she would not onely reiecte any perswasion, that I might vse vnto her, but also ridde her self out of my house. And therefore leaste that should happen, and to the ende that you maie haue your desire, and she haue a dowrie, wherewith she maie be maried, if not withall the honour that the state and calling, wherein she was borne dooeth require, yet with the leaste harme that maie bee possible, since my harde happe is suche, and that my pouertie dooeth so constraine me: I haue determined to doose herein as you shall heare.

My daughter vseth to lye in a lowe Chãmber neare vnto the ſtreate dooꝛe of my houſe, in the whiche Chamber I my ſelf in like ſoꝛte am wont to lye, whenſoeuer we two remaine alone in the houſe, as often times we doe: and commonly I riſing early in the moꝛnyng about ſuche buſineſſe as I haue, do leaue my daughter in bed, where ſhe ſleepeth ſome times two howꝛes oꝛ thꝛee after that I am gone. To moꝛowe moꝛnyng therfoꝛe will I riſe and leaue her alone in that Chamber, and will ſet open the ſtreate dooꝛe, ſo as you ſhall not neede but to puſhe at it, and the chamber dooꝛe likewiſe. You ſhal come veꝛy early as we haue concluded all alone, and entryng into the Chamber, there ſhall you finde my daughter, and abide with her as long as it ſhall pleaſe your ſelf. But I doe once againe (ſiꝛ) beſeeche you as I haue doen befoꝛe, that the matter maie paſſe ſecrete, and not to bee imparted to any other then to vs thꝛee, to the end, that where I ſuffer my ſelf to be led thꝛough neceſſitie to doe that which I doe, and with an entent to place my daughter in mariage, by the meane of that dowꝛie whiche you doe giue her, the caſe beyng knowne, wee reape not eternall ſhame and infamie.

At this deuiſe the yong Pꝛince pauſed a while, thinkyng it ſtraunge that he ſhould goe to a yong maide, that not onely was vnwillyng, but alſo not ſo muche as made pꝛiuie of his commyng, did what he could to refuſe that meane, and to perſwade the mother to deuiſe ſome better. But at the laſt ſeyng none other could be founde moꝛe fitte foꝛ the purpoſe, beyng pꝛicked foꝛwarde with the vehemencie of that appetite, whiche loue had ſtirred vp in him, conſideryng himſelf to be a Pꝛince, and a gallant yong Gentleman, and that he ſhould be alone with his loue, thought that it ſhould not be hard foꝛ hym to winne her to his will: and ſo content to doe as the old Gentlewoman had deuiſed. And beyng parted each from other, he began to attende the commyng of the nexte moꝛnyng and all that night, whiche ſeemed longer vnto him then a hole yere, he lay with his thoughtes and imaginations, in the armes of his Lucilla. As ſone as the daie began to peepe, Don Hercules all alone as he had pꝛomiſed to the mother, went to the houſe of

his Ladie, and findyng the dooꝛes open accoꝛding to pꝛomise, entered into the Chamber wherein Lucilla laie, and hauyng barred the dooꝛe, appꝛoched nere the bedde wherein she laie.

It was in the Moneth of Julie, whiche seaſon in that Countrie is extreame hotte: by reaſon whereof Lucilla tumblyng from one ſide of the bedde vnto the other, had rolled of all the clothes wherewith she had been couered: ſo as she had left her ſelf all naked, and in that ſoꝛte he found her, with Coralles about her necke and her armes, whiche with the difference of their ruddie colour did ſett out and beautifie greatly the excellent faireneſſe of her white bodie. She laie a ſleepe vpon her backe, with her handes caſt ouer her head, (as foꝛ the moſte parte yong women are wont to doe): ſo that foꝛthwith the yong Pꝛince diſcoured her from toppe to toe: and conſideryng with a greedie eye all her whole bodie, not onely he commended her to hym ſelf ſo naked, as he had doen whileſt she was apparailed, but alſo did ſo ſingulary well like her in that ſtate, that he thought he ſaw rather ſome diuine thing, oꝛ ſome Goddeſſe come doune from Heauen, to heape hym with happineſſe, then a moꝛtall creature: and beganne to allowe and commende his owne iudgement, in that he had placed his loue vppon ſo excellente and rare a peece. And therewith bowyng doune hym ſelf to giue her a kiſſe, and ſo to awake her. Beholde she opened her eyes, whiche right well reſembled two faire ſhinyng Starres. And where she was vſed to ſee none other bodie in that Chamber but her mother when she waked, now ſeyng this yong Pꝛince ſtandyng this ouer her, and findyng her ſelf in that ſoꝛte all naked, she gaue a greate ſkritche, and ſaied.

Out alas ſir (foꝛ she knewe hym ſtraight waie) what euill happe hath bꝛought you hether at this tyme? And in ſo ſaiyng as one wonderfully aſhamed to bee ſeene in that plighe, she wꝛapped about her one of the ſheetes, and began with a loude voyce to call her mother.

But perceiuing that her mother would not heare, and that ſhe called in vaine, she began to imagine that she was conſentyng vnto his commyng thether, and lamentyng with teares

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that trickled downe her cheekes, like drops of dewe hanging vppon Roses, in a Maie mornyng, she saied: Alas now I see my mother also hath betraied me. Whiche thyng the young Prince vnderstandyng, saied vnto her. Trouble not your self, nor greeue not (faire Damsell) at my comming hether, but rather reioyce, that your singuler beautie, hath so inflamed me, as one in a maner forgettyng my estate, haue beene contented to come hether all alone, as a priuate man to enioye your companie, if it will please you to accepte my good will, whiche though a thousande other Dames of this Citie, doe wishe and would be glad of, yet haue I deemed none of them worthie thereof but your self. And seeyng your Mother, who hath that power ouer you, that in reason she ought to haue ouer her childe, and knoweth best what is for your good and commoditie, doeth consent hereunto: you (in my iudgement) are not but to shewe your self in like sorte content. For in giuyng your self to me, you doe not abase or cast your self awaie vpon any vilde persone: but shewe your self courteous vnto a Prince, whom your beautie hath made thrall: and in whom you shall finde nothing but gratefull curtesie, to your benefite and satisfaction.

And with these and other like woordes stretched forthe his hande towarde her breastes, that were like two little balles of Iuorie, and drawing nere her to kisse her, she with her hande thrustyng hym modestly backe, saied thus.

Sir I beseech you, by the Princely nobilitie that is in you, and by that loue whiche you saie you beare me, that it will please you, not to force me, or to seeke at my handes any thing against my will: and that since my mother, who ought to haue been the cheef defender of myne honestie, hath abandoned and forsaken me, you will yet of your courtesie vouchsafe, to giue me the hearyng of a fewe woordes, whiche the speciall care I haue of myne honour doeth force me to expresse.

The courteous yong Prince at this request, staied hym self proceedyng any further; and not beeyng desirous to haue her, but with her owne good will, stoode still to heare what it was that Lucilla would saie vnto hym: yet euer hoppyng, with

faire meanes to winne her at the laſt. And ſhe weeppyng very tenderly, beganne to ſaie vnto hym in this ſorte.

I am very ſorie (moſte noble Prince qᵗ ſhe) that Fortune hath been ſo muche myne enemie, that ſhe hath made me a woman, farre vnworthie and vnmeete for you: For that you being ſo great a Prince as you are, and I ſo meane a Gentlewoman: I ſee ſo greate a ſpace and diſtaunce betweene your high eſtate, and my lowe degree, that betweene vs there can bee no portion, or conuenient equalitie: For the whiche cauſe (ſir) I conſidering myne owne eſtate, and not mindyng to exceede my calling, haue a good while ſince choſen Nicander to be my Louer, who in reſpect of his bloud, though he be richer then I, is no whitte nor more nobly borne then my ſelf am. By reaſon of whiche conformitie of bloud and birth, our loue is likewiſe growne to bee equall, and equall the deſire in vs bothe, he to haue me to his wife, and I to haue hym for my houſbande. But the couetouſneſſe (let it bee lawfull for me to ſaie ſo) of his father is ſuche, that although he knoweth me to be a Gentlewomā borne, yet becauſe I am not of that wealth as to bryng hym ſo greate a dowrie, as his riches perchaunce require, he deſpiſeth me, and will not yeeld by any perſwaſion his good will and conſent, that wee maie matche together accordyng to our deſire. Neuertheleſſe (ſir) I conſideryng how feruently this yong Gentleman loueth me, and that alreadie we are in mynd vnited and knit together, with conſent, faithe and loue, doe yet beleeue aſſuredly, that GOD of his ſpeciall goodneſſe and fauour, will graunt vs his aſſured grace, that we maie one daie bee ioyned together in the holy ſtate of Matrimonie. Which thyng if it ſhould happen and come to paſſe, I not hauyng any thyng els to bryng with me for my dowrie but my virginitie, am determined & fully reſolued (by Gods help) to giue it vnto hym, as pure and vnſpotted as I brought it from my mothers wombe. And if my vnhappie chaūce and Fortune be ſuch, as that I cannot haue Nicander to my houſband, I haue concluded with my ſelf (by the grace of God neuer to couple my ſelf to any man liuyng: but to giue and vowe me wholie vnto almightie GOD, and in his ſeruice to ſpend

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my daies a virgine, in continuall Fasting and Praier. Therefore (moste excellent Prince) if Honestie, if Justice, if Religion, haue that power and force in your noble mynde, whiche in reason thei ought to haue, I do beseech you, and for that loues sake that you saie you beare me, that you will preserue and keep vnstained my honestie, and that it would please you with the sound discourse of reason, to temper that feruent appetite whiche hath brought you hether, to the preiudice and breache of my honestie and credite. In doyng whereof you shall shewe your self to be, in deede that noble Prince that the highnesse of your birthe and bloud doeth promise you should be, whereas if you should force and violate me a Virgine, and a weake maiden without defence, there could thereof ensue nought els to me but dishonor and reproche, and withall small praise would it be vnto your excellencie, when it shall be saied that you had ouercome a simple Damsel. And here being interrupted with sobbes and teares exceedyng for the greefe of her mynde, casting doune her eyes for shame and sorow, she helde her peace, attendyng what her hap & the goodnesse of the Prince should dispose of her, in whose courtesie she had reposed all her hope and confidence.

This yong Prince vnderstanding the honest desire of Lucilla, first praised her greatly to hymself for the chastnes of her minde, and being moued with the magnanimitie of his noble minde, though he were pricked with the sharpest darte of the blind boyes quiuer, and that his ardent appetite did still stirre hym to the accomplishment of his desire, yet conquering hym self with reason, he turned al the loue whiche erst he bare vnto this young Ladie, into compassion of her estate, and thus he saied vnto her. The vertue and honestie of thy mynde faire Damsell doe require, that I should make no lesse accompt of thine honour, then if I were come hether to no other entent, then to defende it against any other that should goe aboute to staine or spot it. Therefore not onely thou needest not to feare any violence at my handes, but also maiest hope that I will not faile to further this thy chast purpose, so that thou maiest enioye that yong Gentleman whiche thou hast chosen for thy

houlbande, with al the honour and satisfaction that appertaineth to the honestie of thy minde. And therefore, since nothing els doeth let thee from the gettyng of him but the pouertie of thy state, whereunto thy frowarde Fortune hath vnworthilie brought thee: I will my self supplie in that behalf, that wherein she hath failed, and correcte with my liberalitie, the iniurie that she hath doen thee. And hauyng so saied, he hymself opened the dooze and called her mother, who had gotten her self into a Chamber, and there sate bewailyng the miserie of her state, wherein she had bin driuen in suche sorte to prepare a dowrie for her daughter.

She beyng come he saied vnto her. Gentlewoman, if erst I came hether as a louer vnto your daughter, now I will departe and leaue her as if I were her brother, leauyng her honour no lesse safe and vntouched then I founde it, for so destrueth her vertue that I should deale with her. And for asmuch, as I perceiue she is in loue with a yong Gentleman whom I well knowe, and is in my opinion very worthie of it, and that he in like sorte is in loue with her, and that onely the want of a reasonable dowrie is the cause that she can not become his wife as she desireth. I am content to bestowe vpon her for her contentment, that summe for her dowrie whiche I had purposed to haue giuen her in recompence of my cõtentation, to the ende that this her honest desire maie haue that effect, whiche is moste conuenient to so greate and well grounded an affection, & that her great honestie and vertue doe deserue. Therefore sende you this daie vnto my Treasorer, and he shall forthwith disburse vnto you 2000. pounde, whiche shalbe the dowrie of this your gentle and honest daughter.

And turnyng himself towarde the young Gentlewoman, he said vnto her. And as for you faire Damsell (q he) I craue nothing els now at your handes, but that you keepe this faith of yours, wherewith you are knocked vnto your louer inuiolate and vnspotted, euen as I doe leaue you inuiolate and vnspotted in your mothers handes. How greate the ioye of the mother was, when she sawe the honestie of her daughter (as it were) resaued out of this yong Princes handes, by the force of

her owne vertue, maie better be imagined then expressed with woordes. But aboue all ioyes, the ioye of Lucilla exceeded all other: when she vnderstoode that through the magnificence and liberalitie of the noble yong Prince, she was to haue her Nicander for her housbande.

And tournyng her eyes full of modestie towardes hym she saied, I could not (Sir) haue had any more certaine and infallible token of your loue towarde me, then that whiche now of your greate courtesie and bountie you haue shewed me: whiche I acknowledge to bee so greate, that I am bounde to yeeld your excellencie my most humble and infinite thankes. But for asmuche as woordes doe faile me wherewith I might doe it, I must beseeche you, that it maie reste in your discrete Judgement, to consider how muche I confesse my selfe to bee your debter, when woordes doe faile me, to yeelde you at the least thankes for so greate a benefite. This onely will I saie vnto your Grace, that the remembraunce of so noble annote shall neuer weare out of my minde: and that I will so long as I liue, praie vnto almightie GOD, so to preserue and maintaine your noble persone, as you of your goodnesse haue saued myne honestie: And so to graunt you the accomplishment of all your noble desires, as you haue offered me to make me cõtent of myne, by hauyng my Nicander to bee my housbande: Unto whom, aswell because I haue euer been so disposed, as for that it hath pleased your excellencie to commaunde me, I will alwaies keepe founde and vnstained that faithe, whiche though your courtesie shall ioyne me to him in mariage.

The Damsell seemed vnto the Prince at that instaunt to bee in maner greater then she was in deede, when she once stoode assured of the fauorable of her honestie: and delighting no lesse in the excellencie of her mynd, then he had before been in the beautie of her bodie, he departed from her.

And hauyng caused the two thousande pounde to bee paied vnto her mother as he had promised: he went vnto the Duke his father, and tolde hym all that had passed betweene Lucilla and hym: the maner whereof liked so well the Duke, that he concluded with hymselfe, that all the vertues that vnto her

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been before that tyme in his progenitours, would bee most excellently ioyned in hym.

This yong Prince required his father, to sende for Nicanders father, and to perswade hym to agree, that his Sonne might match with Lucilla, since that she was prouided and furnished with so reasonable a dowrie: whiche thyng the Duke did with a very good will, for that he knewe that if his sonne should haue taken in hande, to perswade the olde man to any suche matter, it might haue stirred some suspition in his head, why the Prince should so doe: And hauing sent for hym accordyngly, when he was come, the Duke after some familiare speeches of course and courtesie, tolde hym he was desirous that his sonne Nicander should take Lucilla to bee his wife, who aswell for her birthe, as for the rare giftes of her mynde, (as he had learned) was worthie to be wife to any great Lord. The olde Gentleman aunswered, that although she had those vertues and giftes whiche he spake of, and were very well borne, yet had she not any dowrie conuenient, or agreeable to his wealthe, whereby she might deserue to bee matched with his sonne. Yes Marie saied the Duke, for I my self because I would not haue so greate vertue as is in her, to bee oppressed by Fortunes spight, haue bestowed vppon her two thousande pounde to serue for her dowrie.

The olde man hearyng of suche a somme, was very well content to doe as the Duke would haue hym, and the nexte daie through the liberalitie of the Prince, the mariage was concluded and knitte vp, whiche had so long been delaied and hindered by the coueteousnesse of the olde man, and the pouertrie of Lucilla, with the infinite ioye and contentment of the two yong Louers, who had long wished and desired that happie daie.

What vertue, or what continence of Alexander, or of Scipio may be compared to this? Scipio abstained from the yong Gentlewoman whiche was presented vnto hym in Spayne: Alexander from Darius his daughter. But it was very easie for either of them so to doe: aswell because thei were in the furie of Warre, and the soundes of Drummes and Trumpets:

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as for that those women were of a straunge Nation, and enemies vnto them, and neuer before that tyme seen of any of thē, muche lesse desired. Whereas this yong prince, who euen bathing as it were in blisse, liuing at his ease and pleasure, in the flower of his youthe, and in the heate of his amourous flames, had a yong Gentlewoman of a rare beautie, not of straunge Nation, or any otherwise to be hated, but extremely beloued, in his handes, and voluntarily yeelded, and committed vnto him by her owne mother: and yet not onelie tempered himself and refrained to defile her chaste and honest bodie, but also bestowed liberallie her dowrie vppon her, to the ende that an other might enioye her, and bee her housebande, whom she had chosen to loue and like of: did without all question farr excede all humaine courtesie, in so Noble and so vertuous an acte. Whereby he made apparaunt, that although he were pricked forward, with the sharpe spurres of Loue, and his sensuall appetite, yet was he of that highnesse of courage, and of that cōstancie of mind, that he was able not onely to cōquer himself, but also to subue the forces of Loue, wherevnto bothe mortall mennes valour doeth commonlie yeelde, and the verie power of the Goddes themselues (if wee shall beleeue the Fables of the auncient writers) hath shewed it self often times inferior.

And thus this honeste Damsell Lucilla, by the meanes of her Chastitie, the vertue and excellencie whereof, did winne and Maister the harte of that yong Prince, muche more then the perfection of her bodilie beautie had doen before, obtained the thyng she moste desired and ioyed in, whiche was to haue Nicander to her housebande. With whom she liued euer after in greate contentment and happinesse: still nourishyng with kinde and louyng demeanour eche to other, that feruente affection, whiche from their firste acquaintaunce, had taken full possession of bothe their liberties.

FINIS.

Of Fineo and Fiamma.

The Argument of the iiij. Hiſtorie.

¶ The hard aduentures of Fineo, *with his beloued* Fiamma, *who after ſondrie conflictes of Fortune, were in the ende ſolde as ſlaues to the Kyng of* Tuniſe, *who ſeyng their perfecte loue, cauſed them to bee Maried, and after honouryng them with ſondrie preſentes, ſent them home to* Sauona, *whereby their Parentes and freendes, thei were ioyfully receiued.*

IN Genoua, one of the faireſt and moſte famous Citees in Italie, there was ſometime a yong gentlewoman of excellente beautie, called Fiamma, that was in loue with a yong Gentleman of Gauona (a Citee Subiecte vnto the State of Genoua, and diſtaunte from thence about thirtie miles) whoſe name was Fineo, and their Loue beeyng mutuall, and tendyng to no other ende, then to bee linked and ioyned together by Marriage, thei would not long haue ſtaied, to bryng their honeſt deſires to a good ende and concluſion, had not the Father of the Gentlewoman refuſed his conſent, and ſhewed himſelf contrarie to this their loue and good will. For he miſlikyng with the matche, either for that he purpoſed to place her better, or becauſe he would not haue her Married to any man, that ſhould carie her out of Genoua, did ofte times chide and reprehende his Daughter, for caſtyng her affection vpon that yong Gentleman, that was a ſtraunger vnto theim, and in effecte but a ſubiecte, though he were bothe of bloud and richeſſe equall vnto them.

But for all that the father could do, or any other of her frendes,

des,the fire which loue had kindled in this yong couples hea-
stes,slaked no whit at all, but still increased, bothe hop yng in
the ende,to win her freendes good will,and attain the fruites
of their desired loue. This yong Damsell had to her brother a
stout & valiant yong gentleman,who beyng offended greatly
that Fineo should continue his loue toward his sister, and fol-
lowe the pursute of that,whiche he knew well inough,her frē-
des were vnwilling to yeld vnto:had caused him to be spoken
vnto,and to be warned that he should desist, and leaue to solli-
cite her: but he for all that ceased not,but continued his suite:
wherefore this brother of hers determined,to make him leaue
of,by force and dint of Sworde. For although there were at
that time a verie straight lawe in the citee,that no man should
were his sworde,and paine of death appointted for hym, that
should hurte any man with any weapon:yet bothe these Gen-
tlemen weare their swordes, for that thei bothe had charge of
souldiers, that laie then in garrison for defence of the Citee.

And hauing one daie mette Fineo in the streate alone, and
himself beyng verie well accompanied with other gentlemen
he began to giue him euill language:and beyng a gentleman
of greate courage, and though he were a straunger there, not
beyng able to endure to be iniured in wordes,said to him bold
ly and roundly againe,that if thei twoo were alone, he durste
not vse those speeches vnto hym, for he would well giue hym
to vnderstande, that he was no man to take wrong at his han-
des,and that time and occasion would serue one daie(he doub-
ted not to make hym knowe, that he had offended one that
would beare no Coales. Whereupon his aduersarie hauyng
drawne forthe his Sworde, whilest he was yet speakyng,ran
feercely vpon hym,thinkyng to haue striken hym: But Fineo
also a verie lustie gentleman and quicke of eye, and nimble of
hande,drewe out his sworde,and not onely warded the blowe
of his enemie, but also hurte hym, though but lightlie in the
hand. Forthwith thei that were with the yong gentlewomans
brother,enuironed him,and tooke him prisoner,and deliuered
hym into the handes of the Magistrate, or cheef officer of the
Citee. And the penaltie beyng suche, as is before mentioned,

for hurtyng of any man within the Citee, and especially a gē-tleman, Fineo was condemned to lose his hedde.

Neuertheleſſe, he beyng verie well freinded, and ſupported by many principall gentlemen of the Citee, thei laboured ſo muche for him, that thei obtained, that he ſhould not be behedded: but that his penaltie ſhould bee conuerted vnto an other puniſhement, verie little better if it were no worſe. For hauing bound him faſte hande and foote, thei laied him in a ſmal Boate, and in verie ſtormie weather, ſet him in the maine ſea, and there left him to the rule and gouernment of Fortune, and to the diſpoſitiō of God, and mercie of the waues and windes. The boate was a long while beatē and toſſed, by the rage and furie of the Seas, and poore Fineo vnder diuerſe and ſondrie ſtormes and ſhapes, had before his eyes a thouſande times the preſence of Death. Yet in that fearfull and mortall perill, he ceaſed not to call vpon the name of his deare Fiamma, and in that extreamitie and imminent daunger, did he yet in maner glorifie himſelf, and thinke himſelf happie, that he ſhould ende his life for the loue of his Ladie.

Whiles he was thus toſſed and tormented, ſtill lookyng for none other but preſent death, the Tempeſt began to ceaſe, and the ſtorme and rage of Seas to bee aſſwaged. When loe he diſcouered a Fregate of Moores that went a roauyng, and were then newe gone abroade, to ſpie whether the Storme which was then paſt, had not happely prepared for them, ſome occaſion of gaine and bootie. Theſe Moores had no ſooner diſcouered this little boate, thus fleetyng at all aduentures, but hoping to finde therein ſome prey for their pſiote, thei made toward it: And hauing at the boordyng thereof, founde Fineo bounde hande and foote, and perceiuing by his countenaunce and apparell, that he was no verie baſe perſone, thei vntied hym, and ſette hym in their Fregate as a ſlaue to rowe, vntill ſuche time as thei ſhould determine further what to doe with hym: who although that ſeruitude and captiuitie, were greeuous vnto him, yet conſideryng with himſelf, that it was better for hym to be in the power of men, though thei were Infidells, then in the power of Seas and Windes: he comforted himſelf

hymselfe, that yet if he liued, he might still hope throughe the goodnesse of God, one daie to be so happie, as to enioy his Ladie and Loue: he framed himselfe to beare with patient minde, that heauie yoke of his captiuitie.

Fiamma hauing vnderstoode the vnfortunate accident happened to her Louer, beleeuyng certainly that he was dedde, and that she should neuer see hym againe. Wherefore she herselfe resoluyng, that she would no longer liue, gaue her selfe to deuise what kinde of death she were best to chuse, and in doubt thereof she passed some fewe daies, dissemblyng still in the house her sorrowe and greef, with a merie and chearfull countenance, as though she had cleane forgotten, and not once remembred her Louer Fineo. But in the ende, after long debatyng with her selfe, she resolued to dye the same kinde of death, and to make that ende, whiche she imagined Fineo had doen.

There was an other Gentleman of the Citee, who was no lesse enamoured of this Gentlewoman, then Fineo was: who supposing that now since she sawe there was no remedie for her, to recouer her louer, whom bothe she and all the Citee, accoumpted certainly to be dedde: he might perchaunce by sute obtaine her good will, and so procure her to bee his wife, with the consent of her freendes. And therefore not long after the mischaunce of Fineo, he caused her father to bee dealt withall for the bestowyng of his daughter vpon hym: and the Father beeyng willyng enough to agree thereunto, and hauyng questioned with his daughter therevpon, and findyng her to giue sober and obedient answere with fewe wordes, presupposing that she was willyng to doe as he would haue her, made promise of her vnto this yong Gentleman, and agreed vpon the dowrie, and all other circumstaunces necessarie, for the coupling of twoo suche persones together.

The night that wente before the daie appointed for their Marriage, Fiamma callyng vnto her a Moore, that was slaue in her fathers house, and had the keepyng of a small Boate of the Gentlemans, wherein when he liste to disport hymselfe, he was wont to take the aire vpon the sea, in tyme of faire weather, and to goe to their houses of pleasure, whereof that coast

is verie plentifull, and theim of exceadyng beautie. Whiche Mooze had liued so many yeres in that thraldome, that he was now become so old as she thought, she needed not to feare any force or violence at his handes, she began to perswade hym, to putte on a desire to deliuer hymself out of Captiuitie, so as he might liue the reste of his yeres in libertie, and at his ease: wherevnto findyng hym readie and willyng, if the meanes or occasion were offred hym: she gaue him in hand a good round somme of money, whiche she had laied together, and made hym promise to carrie her into the Sea in the Boate, whereof he had the custodie, and afterwardes to doe that whatsoeuer it were, that she should commaunde hym.

This wicked and faithlesse Mooze, seyng himself not onely to purchase his libertie, but also make so greate a gaine of readie money, that he was not like at any tyme after, to liue in want or pouertie, was onely thankfull in his minde towarde the yong Gentlewoman, but straight waie began to purpose and to deuise, to make a greater gaine of her owne persone, by carryng her vnto the kyng of Tunise, and sellyng of her vnto hym at a verie high price. And with this entention, the mischeeuous knaue assured her, that he would doe in all pointes, as she would haue hym. Wherefore, when all the reste of the house were in their firste sleape, the Damsell with this wretched Mooze, went out of her fathers hous, and gat her into the Boate, and the weather beyng verie faire, the knaue began to rowe, and make saile along the coaste toward Ligorno, from whiche by breake of the daie, thei were not verie farre. When this yong gentlewoman, sawe that she was now so farr from home, that she needed not to feare, to be driuen backe again to Genoua, she willed the Mooze to rowe to ꝑ shore, and to land himself, and then to shoue of the Boate againe: for that her determination was so to dye, swallowed vp with the waues of the sea, as she supposed her Fineo to haue bẽn. But the wicked knaue, who had a father fetche in his hed, and thoughtes farre differed from the Gentlewomans, made her beleeue that thei were yet nere vnto Genoua, and aduised her to bee contente, that thei might goe somewhat farther, to the ende that her fa-

ther

ther if he sent after them, might not ouertake them.

Neuertheleſſe, ſhe hauyng often tymes vrged hym to doe as ſhe erſte bad hym, and he ſtill protracted the tyme, and ſhiftyng her of with one tale or an other: ſhe began to ſuſpect his drift. The Mornyng therefore beyng well ſpent, ſhe made as though ſhe would haue looked ouer the Boate ſide, into the Water, or haue waſhed her handes in the Sea, and on the ſodaine would haue caſte her ſelf ouer boarde. But the craftie Moore ſuſpectyng her intente, caught holde of her aboute the middle, and not onely held her from throwing her ſelf into the Sea, but alſo bound her faſte hande and foote, and wheras ſhe of her courteſie, had bothe ſet hym at libertie, and liberally beſtowed good ſtore of wealthe vppon hym, he as a treacherous Infidell, bereued her of her libertie, makyng her an vnfortunate Slaue vnder his diſpoſition, and beeyng moued with a greedy couetous minde, thought that too little whiche ſhe had giuen hym, and therefore determined (as is afore ſaied) to ſell her perſone, and to encreaſe his goodes by that meanes.

The deſolate Damſell, when ſhe ſawe her ſelf ſo vſed by that villaine, full of woe and greefe, ceaſed not to rebuke the vilde Caitiue, that little regarded her ſpeeches, the breach of his Faithe and promiſe, and blamyng her ſelf for truſtyng of hym: and then repented when it was too late, that ſhe had not obeied her Father, and followed the aduiſe of her freendes, ſhe beganne to curſe her Deſtinie, and her cruell Fortune, and to crie out vpon the Heauens, that had made her become the vnfortunateſt yong woman, that euer loued man.

And whileſt ſhe was thus lamentyng her harde happe, and the Moore as faſte as he could with his Owres, labouryng to ſpeede his voiage: A little Foiſte or Galley of Moores, that wente prollyng vp and doune the Coaſte, hauyng eſpied the ſmall Boate, drewe nere vnto it, and booarded it. And hauyng founde this yong Gentlewoman beeyng bounde therein, thei would haue taken her awaie: but the old knaue offeryng to reſiſt them, and to kepe her out of their handes, thei toke her awaie from him perforce, and wounding him very ſore. And aſked of her in their language, from whence ſhe came, and what

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ſhe was: but ſhe not vnderſtanding them, could make them no aunſwere, but onely with teares and weepyng, make them to vnderſtande, that ſhe was a wofull and vnfortunate damſell. But the old Moore feelyng hymſelf wounded to death, before he died tolde theim, bothe of what place and Parentage ſhe was, and laied before theim by plaine reaſon, how greate a bootie thei might accoumpte thei had made that Mornyng, if thei did carrie her vnto the king of Tuniſe (as he had thought to haue doen) and ſell her vnto hym. He beyng dedde, thei diſpoiled him, and tooke from hym all that, whiche Fiamma had giuen, and ſo he hauyng thought by treacherie, and breakyng of his faithe, to make greate gaine, loſte bothe his life, and all that whiche he had gotten, of the vnaduiſed and euill counſelled yong Gentlewoman. And hauyng placed her in their Foiſte, and cõforted her as well as thei could, thei tooke their waie ſtraight toward Tuniſe.

It fortuned that the other Fregate of Moores, that had founde and taken Fineo (as is alreadie ſaied before) met with this other Foiſte or Gallie, wherein Fiamma was, and aſſaulted it, and hauyng fought together a good while) for that the other reſiſted, and defended them ſelues ſtoutely) in fine, the Fregate wherein Fineo was) who in the encounter, and during the fight, had ſhewed greate valour emong the reſt) ouercame the other, and tooke from them all that thei had: ſo that Fiamma and Fineo were bothe now together, in the compaſſe of one ſmall veſſell. And although in that extreamitie of bothe their euill fortunes, it was a great comfort for theſe twoo Louers to ſee one the other, and that bothe longed and deſired extremely, to imbrace eche other, and to tell the one to the other their accidentes, and vnfortunate aduentures. Neuertheleſſe Fineo made ſignes to Fiamma, that in nowiſe ſhe ſhould take knowledge, or acquaintaunce of him, and accordyngly ſhe diſſembled and made no ſhewe, but as one had neuer ſeen hym.

Fineo for the valoure and courage, whiche he had ſhewed in the battaile, was deliuered of his chaines, and muche made of emong the Moores, vntill ſuche tyme as thei had conducted bothe him and her (as thei did verie ſhortly after) vnto the

kyng

kyng of Tunise. Who hauyng seen and considered Fineo, and vnderstoode by the Pirates, that his comely personage was accompanied with greate valour, brought him, and cooke him to his seruice, in good place nere his owne persone. And beeyng moued with the beautie of the yong Gentlewoman, bargained for her likewise, for a greate somme of money, and caused her to be put in the Cube, whiche is a place where he keepeth his Concubines (as the Turke doeth his in his Serraglio) emong a greate many of other women, and esteemed her verie muche, for that the Rouers (who had learned of those other that thei ouercame) all that whiche the olde Moore had declared vnto theim, of her callyng and condition, did assure hym that she was a Gentlewoman, borne of a noble Familie in Genoua.

Fineo by his seruice and discrite behauiour, became in shorte tyme verie deare vnto the kyng, so that in lesse then the space of one whole yere, the kyng of speciall trust, gaue hym the charge of the gate of the Cube, whiche office the kynges of Tunise are neuer wont to giue, but vnto suche as are in singular fauour about them: In the whiche Fineo to his greate contentmente, had the commoditie daiely to see his Fiamma, and she had no lesse comforte and satisfaction, to beholde and looke vpon hym, whiche opportunitie thei enioyed, and handeled so discritely, that thei neuer gaue any cause of suspition to any persone, of their feruent good will and affection.

The maner or custome of the Kyng, was to cause his Concubines to come vnto hym, and to lye with them by order as thei had been bought, or come to his handes: By reason of whiche custome, for that there were verie many bought before the commyng thether of Fiamma, there was alreadie a whole yere and halfe, well nye paste after her sale, and yet her turne was not come to be called for. But remainyng now but three others, to be brought vnto the kyng before her. Fineo considering to his intollerable greef, that she was ere it were long, to bee likewise called for, began to bee tormented with incredible passion, and anguishe of minde: and his woe increased ten thousande folde, by feare and imagination whiche he con-

ceiued, that the beyng aboue all the kinges Concubines farre the faireſt, when he had once enioyed her, he would take her to bee one of his wiues, whiche feare did no whit leſſe torment and afflicte Fiamma, then it did her Louer.

Whileſt bothe theſe yong Louers liued in this ſorte, there chaunced to arriue at Tuniſe a Ship of Sauona, with certaine Marchauntes of that Citee: who ſeyng Fineo there, and knowyng hym, were wonderfully amerualled findyng hym aliue, for that he had been lamented at Sauona, of all his frendes for dedde. Fineo likewiſe knowyng thoſe Marchauntes, and hauyng auctho*itie and meanes to pleaſure them in the Court, welcomed them, and made muche of them in frendly ſort: and demaundyng of the ſtate and welfare of his father, and brother and other freendes, thei certified hym that thei were all well, and that when thei ſhould vnderſtande that he was aliue, and in ſo good a caſe, thei would be verie ioyfull, and thinke theim ſelues happie, if thei might hope to ſee hym once come again, as thei doubted not but one daie he would and might.

Theſe Marchauntes hauing diſpatched their buſineſſe departed thence, and by them Fineo wrote letters to his Father, and to his brother, certifiyng them of his beyng at Tuniſe, and how that Fiamma was with him, and that he deſired to deliuer hymſelf out of bondage, and her with hym: Whiche thyng he thought he might eaſily bryng to paſſe, if his brother would come thither, and withall deſcribed vnto them a plot, whiche he had caſte for the execution of his intent and deſire.

Thei beyng retourned ſafe vnto Sauona, deliuered the letters vnto the father and brother of Fineo, who with the reſt of of his freendes, and in effecte all the whole Citee, were verie glad that his Fortune had not been altogether ſo froward toward hym, as thei had ſuppoſed.

And his brother accordyng to his inſtructions, prepared a verie prette Fregate, verie well appointed and furniſhed with Marchaundize, emong whiche there were many trifles, and thynges of price meete for Ladies and Gentlewomen. And beyng arriued therewith a a Tuniſe, Fineo brought them vnto the Kyng, whom thei preſented with ſome thynges of

ſmall

ſmall price, whiche were verie gratefull, and acceptable vnto him, and emong other ſpeeches thei ſaied, that thei had aboode many prette thinges for Dames and Ladiee, which thing the kyng vnderſtandyng, commaunded Fineo that the cheefeſt of them might be brought into the Cube, to ſhewe ſuche thinges as thei had vnto his Concubines: by whiche occaſion he gatte that opportunitie which he looked for, to confer and deale more priuately with them without ſuſpition, and to giue the better order, for the accompliſhement of aſmuche as he had deuiſed.

Fineo and his brother therefore beyng come into the Cube ſhewed forthe emong thoſe women, ſuche wares as thei had brought, to pleaſe their fancies, and gaue vnto them all, ſome one trifle or an other, as a gentle preſent to the firſte, and the brother of Fineo preſented Fiamma emong the reſt, with a verie faire Purſe, richelie embroidered with Golde and Pearle, in the whiche there was encloſed a letter, written by Fineo, by the conrentes whereof, ſhe might vnderſtande at large, al that whiche he did wiſhe, and would haue her to doe, to make their eſcape together, and to ridd themſelues out of that thraldome and captiuitie. Aſſone as the twoo brethren had doen that thei came for, and were departed, Fiamm by their maner gathering, that the gifte of that Purſe, contained ſome Miſterie, withdrewe her ſelf into a ſecret place, and hauyng opened it, ſhe found therin the letter, whiche when ſhe had read, ſhe thanked Almightie God, that of his goodneſſe had ſhewed her the waie, to deliuer her ſelf out of Captiuitie, and from becommyng diſhoneſtly the Concubine of an Infidell kyng.

And when this appointed daie, for the perfourmyng of their purpoſe was come: Fiamma in the night when all was ſilent, and others ſlept, came to a windowe barred with Iron, where Fineo and his brother were attendyng for her: Who with certaine inſtrumentes, whiche thei had brought for that purpoſe, brake and wreſted the Grate of the windowe, and takyng her awaie with them, thei gott her into their Barque, and hoiſſed ſaile, and directed their courſe with a merrie Winde, toward the coaſte of Italie, whiche ſerued theim verie faire all that night long, & the moſte part of the next daie. In the mourning

Fiamma beyng milled, and Fineo likewise, the kyng (was aduertised of their escape) who perceiuyng the Marchauntes to bee gone also, rested assured that it was a set matche made, for the stealyng Fiamma awaie. And beeyng full of rage and despight towardes them all, caused certaine Galleis and other light vessells to be armed in all haste, and to be sent after the, giuyng straight charge and Commission to his Captaines, that either thei should bryng Fineo and the Damsell, with the cheefe of the Marchauntes aliue vnto hym, because he would cause them all three to bee buried aliue: or that thei could not get them aliue, thei should bring their thre heddes, for that he would haue them bee set ouer the Cube, for an example and a terrour to all others.

But before those Galleis and other vessells, could be in a readinesse to depart: Fortune not hauyng yet her full of persecutyng and afflictyng these twoo poore Louers, caused a contrarie winde, with an extreame storme and tempest to arise, by force whereof, the vessell wherein thei were, was not without greate daunger, driuen backe again to Tunise, with so muche greef and sorrowe of all them that were in it, as thei maie imagine, that knowe the crueltie and barbarousnesse of that people. But in the beginnyng of the storme, the brother of Fineo, dispairyng of his life, as he that was assured, either to be drowned by rage of the winde and seas, or els to die in torment, if he returned into the handes of those Infidelles, gat hymself into his Cockboate, and therein hazarded his life: and after muche adoe, and a thousande perilles of present death, recouered the coaste of Italie at the laste, and returned home to Sauona ful of woe with heauie tidynges, declaryng vnto his father, that either the Fregate would bee loste, or els driuen backe again to Tunise, where he was well assured, that bothe his brother, and the yong Damsell his Louer, should bee murthered in moste cruell maner.

At whiche dolefull newes, the father, as if he had seen his sonne lye dedde before him, began to weepe and lament, complaining of his hard Destinie, that caused him to liue so long, or reserued him to see those cruell and bitter daies.

Fineo

Fineo seyng himselfe brought to so hard an exigent, for that their vessell was now driuen backe nere vnto Tunise, and knowyng that he should feele the smarte of his faulte, and the kynges anger in sharpest maner and sorte: beyng determined to liue no longer, and to preuent the crueltie of the kyng drew out his swoorde, and would therewith haue stroken him selfe to death. But Fiamam catchyng hym by the arme: Alas Fenio (quoth she) what shall become of me if you bee dead? Shall I remaine behinde to endure the cruell torementes, that I know this Infidell hath prepared for me? Yet rather since that death must needes deliuer vs of our misfortunes, before you execut vppon your selfe this your determination, ride me out of the worlde, and deliuer me from the paines, whiche alreadie I feele in my imaginacion, wherewith I assure my selfe thei wil bryng me to a shamefull death. And with these woordes offeryng her breast vnto him, she requested him to strike her with his Swoorde. But Fineo bad her bee of good comfort, for your beautie (my Fiamma saied he) beeyng so singulare as it is, I knowe will saue you; and therefore you neede not feare, and I alone should be the man that thei would plague, and torment to death for vs bothe, and therefore (my deare) suffer me to dye before, and content thy self to liue, and vouchsafe sometyme to remember thy vnfortunate Fineo when he is dedde.

Whilest thei were thus talkyng and debatyng, whiche should firste dye, the people whiche the Kyng had sent out to apprehende them, came and boorden their Fregate, and tooke theim bothe, whom thei bounde in Chaines, and brought on lande to the presence of the kyng. Who as sone as he behelde the beautie of Fiamma, felt his former wrath and crueltie entended to relente, and in muche milder maner, then the twoo Captiues hoped or looked for, he saied vnto her: tell me what moued you, I praie you faire Damsell to run awaie, and flie from me, at whose handes you had no cause to looke for any other entreatie, then louing and freendly? Fiamma who in that yere and a halfe, that she had been in the Cube, had learned the language indifferently well: made aunswere vnto him. That no cause or meanyng to flie from hym, but her earnest desire

to enioye Fineo, whom she had loued, and chosen for her husband many yeres before, had forced her to doe that whiche she had doen: And herewith she told hym, the beginnyng of their acquaintance and loue, and how many perilles and daungers thei had run through, still hoppyng one daie, to come vnto that happie hower, wherin their troubles should haue an ende, and that thei might bee honestly vnited, and enioye one an other: And finallie, castyng her self doune at his feete, with aboundaunce of teares, she besought hym with all humilitie to pardone her, if she had offended him, and withall to forgiue Fineo since that long and faithfull loue, had made them to procure the accomplishement of their desires.

The teares of Fiamma, and the onely name of Loue were of suche force and vertue, in the harte of the kyng, though he were barbarous, and cruell of Nature, that the Ire and hatered, whiche he had conceiued against theim before, was then conuerted and chaunged into pitie, and compassion of their misfortunes: and where before he had appointed a cruell death to bee their punishementes, he now determined to ouercome with his courtesie, the frowardnesse of their peruerse Fortune and to make theim, after so many perilles and daungers contented and happie, and to see an ende at laste of their miseries by makyng theim to enioye their longe hoped for desires. Wherfore, hauing caused thē to be bothe forthwith vnbound, he tooke from his owne finger, a meruailous faire and precious Rubie, and giuyng it vnto Fineo, he saied vnto hym: since your Fortune hath been suche, that after so many straunge aduentures, and through suche daungers, you are fallen into my handes: I for my parte will not bee he, that will extinguishe, or quenche the flames of so feruent and constaunt Loue, or vnloose or dissolue the bandes, wherewith your hartes be bounde and knitt together. And therefore Fineo, I doe not onely pardon you bothe, but also I will haue thee, before thou departe hence, to wedde this Damsell with this Ring, and to take her for thy wife, and that she henceforthe enioye thee for euer as her housebande. It is not to be demaunded, whether the twoo Louers, (who looked for none other of the kynges courtesies

then

then death) were glad to heare hym vse those speeches, yea or no. But bothe beeyng fallen on their knees, and in humblest maner, hauyng yeelded their thankes vnto his Maiestie. Fineo in his presence Wedded Fiamma, and tooke her for his wife, to the vnspeakable ioye and contentation, of bothe their hartes and mindes. And the kyng to honour their Mariage, caused a sumptuous feast to bee prepared, with no lesse charge and aboundaunce of all thynges, then if he had Married a Daughter of his owne, to some greate Lorde, or cheef manne of that Countrey.

And after certaine daies, the twoo yong Maried Louers, beyng desirous to returne into their owne Countrey, he gaue theim verie riche and costlie presentes, and sent theim honourablie accompanied home to Sauona: Whose arriuall was no lesse meruailous, then ioyfull to the Father and Brother of Fineo, and to all the Citee, thei hauyng been assuredlie esteemed, and accoumpted as dedde. Afterwardes thei sent to Genoua to Fiammas Father and Brother, certifiyng of all that had happened, who then perswadyng themselues, that God & Nature had created those twoo yong folke, to be matched and ioyned together in Wedlocke, were wel contented with that, whiche thei sawe was Gods will should bee. And beyng gone bothe to Sauona, the Father embraced and accepted Fineo for his Sonne in Lawe, and the Brother for his Brother in law. And the twoo yong Louers liued euer after, in greate happinesse and felicitie: giuyng by this successe of their hard Fortune, an assured argumente, and a notable example, whereby we maie learne, that though froward Fortune doe for a while, crosse and molest the desires and trauailes of menne, yet in the ende she can not let, but that of necessitie those thynges must come to passe, whiche GOD by his Diuine prouidence, wherewith he ruleth the whole worlde, hath appointed shall take effecte.

FINIS.

¶ The

Of twoo Bretheren
and their Wiues.

The Argument of the fift Hiſtorie.

¶ Twoo brothers making choiſe of their Wiues, the one chooſe for beautie, the other for riches, it happened vnto them after thei were married, the one of their Wiues proued to bee of light diſpoſition, the other a common ſcolde, in what maner thei liued with their houſbandes, and how in the ende the firſt became to liue orderly and well, but the other could be brought by no deuiſe, to any reaſon or good maner.

Entlewomen, bekore I will proceade any farther in this Hiſtorie, I muſte deſire you to arme your ſelues with pacience in readyng hereof, that if you finde any thyng that might breede offence to your modeſte myndes, take it in this ſorte, that I haue written it onely to make you merrie, and not to ſette you a ſnarryng or grudgyng againſt me, for although I meane to preſent you with a Chapter of Knauerie, yet it ſhall be paſſable, and ſuche as you maie verie well permit, and the matter that I mynde to write, is vpon this queſtion, whither a man were better to be maried to a wiſe Harlot, or to a fooliſhe ouerthwarte and braulyng woman, this queſtion I knowe will ſeme very doubtfull vnto ſome, and yet in my opinion verie eaſie to be anſwered, and to ſpeake my minde without diſſimulation of bothe thoſe euills, I thinke the firſt is leaſt, and therefore is to bee choſen: and herein I could alledge for my better proofe, an example of the auncient *Romaines*, who in al their gouernmentes were moſte wiſe and politique, emongſt whom

whom the infirmitie of the first was borne withall, because it proceeded of the frailtie of the flesh, but the courage of the second was euer condemned, for that it did abound frō a wicked and mischeuous mynde. And in common reason, it is not lesse noysome for a man, to liue accompanied with a wife, who although she will some tyme flie out, can so wisely dissemble with her housbande, that he shall neuer so muche as suspecte her, whereby he shall receiue no discontentment in his minde, then to be bedfellowe with Xantippa a cōmon scold, who daiely and hourely will be checking, taunting, and railing at him, in suche sorte, that he shall thinke himself moste blest and happie, when he is farthest from her companie, but for your better confirmation, I haue set forthe this Historie of two brethren, the one of them married to a wenche, that could so cunningly behaue her self towardes hym, that he had thought she had beleeued there had been no other God but himself, & yet by your leaue, she would take reason when it was proffered her, but what of that: the harte neuer greeues, what the eyes see not. The other was married to a Dame, that frō her nauill downeward was more chast and continent, but otherwise of her tong suche a deuill of Hell, that the poore man her housbande could neuer enioye merry daie nor houre, although he deuised many a pretie remedie, as by the readyng of the processe of this tale you shall better perceiue, whiche followeth in this sorte.

There was sometyme remaining in a famous Citie twoo brethren, the eldest (according to the custome of the place) enioyed his fathers goods and possessions after his death, whereby he was wel able to liue, the yongest had neither landes nor liuynges, sauyng that his Father had trained hym vp in learnyng, whereby he was able to gouerne hymself, in all maner of companies where soeuer he became. These two brethren beyng wearie of their single liues, disposed themselues to mariage: The eldest beyng of hymself well able to liue, sought a wife onely for her beautie, without any other respect either to her conditions or riches, and as the prouerbe is (he that seekes shal finde) so in the ende he lighted on a Gentlewoman, called by the name of Mistres Doritie, whose beautie in deede was

very excellent, and there withall had a passyng readie witte, Marie her trainyng vp had not been after the best, nor worst maner, but as a man might saie, after the common sorte: this gentlewoman he Married, who could so wel handle him with kissynges, cullynges, and other amarous exercises, that her housband thought himself, the most fortunate man that liued, to light on suche a wife, although she cunningly armed his head with hornes, as after you shall heare.

The second brother left (as you haue heard) without maintenance or liuyng, sought for a wife onely to releue his want, and fortuned to hit of a widowe in deede with greate wealth, but in conditions so ouerthwart, and so spiteful of her tongue, that the poore man had not been Married fully out a moneth, but he more then a thousand tymes, cursed the Priest that maried hym, the Sexten that opened the Church doore when he went to bee married, yea, and his owne vnhappie legges that had carried his bodie to bee yoked to so great a mischeef. But because I doe minde more orderly to tell you the maners of these twoo Gentlewomen: I will first beginne with Mistres Doritie, whose housbande after thei had been a while maried, fortuned to fall sicke, and then accordyng to that Countrey maner, a Doctor of Phisicke was presently sent for, who commyng many tymes to visite his pacient, began to beholde and contemplate the liuely beautie of this gentlewoman, and lent her many rowling looke, and secrete countenaunces, in suche sorte that Mistres Doritie beyng well practised in the Arte of Loue, and seyng Maister Doctor to be a man as sufficient, to content a Gentlewoman in her Chamber that was whole, as to minister Medicines to those that were sicke, did not onely requite him againe with looke for looke, but she yeelded hym a large vsurie, and paied him more then fortie in the hundred: Maister Doctor who was likewise skilful enough, could wel perceiue whereto those lookes did tende: Upon a tyme beyng alone in her companie, he saied vnto her as followeth.

Mistres Doritie, if the experience whiche I haue learned in Phisickes arte, might craue credite, and make my tale to bee the better beleeued, assure your self then that I minde to

saie

saie nothyng, but that that shal bee to your owne behooke, and the reason that makes me to enter into this discourse, is the pitie that I take to see so proper a gentlewoman as your self, should be so deceiued in a housbande, who although you shall finde hym bothe honest, gentle, and louing, yea, and peraduenture maie content you with such rightes, as appertaine to the Marriage bedde, yet assure your self he shall neuer be able to get you with child, considering your Natures and complexions be so farre different the one from the other, whereby you are like for euer to remaine without issue, and one of the greatest comfortes that maie happen vnto vs in this worlde, is to see our selues as it were regenerate and borne a newe in our children, and barrennesse in the auncient tyme, hath been accompted not onely infamous, but also moste hateful amongst women, in so muche that Sara gaue her owne Handmaide to her housband, because she could not her self conceiue a childe: but I would wishe women more witt then to followe Saras example. God defende thei should bee so foolishe to giue their Maidens to their Housbandes, I would wishe them rather them selues to take their men: it hath been euer holden for the greater wisedome, rather to take then to giue, and sure thei shall finde it more for their owne profites, that if their housebands want be suche, that he is not able to get a child, to take helpe of some other, that maie supplie his imperfections, but I trust I shal not neede to vse many perswasions, considering that euery wise woman will thinke, that I haue reason on my side: Thus Mistres Doritie, you haue heard the somme of my tale, protesting, that if my seruice maie any waies stande you in steade, I am as readie to obeye, as he ouer whom you haue power to commaunde.

Mistres Doritie, who all this while had well pondered his woordes, knewe very well how to whett Maister Doctor on, and the more to set his teeth on edge, answered hym thus: I perceiue Maister Doctor you are something pleasantly disposed, and hereafter when I shall finde my housbandes infirmitie to be suche as you haue saied, I meane to sende for you, desiryng you, that you would not be out of the waie, to helpe me

when I haue neede.

The Doctor knewe not well how to vnderstande these wordes, whether thei were merily spoken, or otherwise in disdaine of his former talke, aunswered thus. Alas Mistres Doritie, pardon me if my wordes seeme any thyng offensiue vnto you, assuryng you that in this meane space, that I haue made my recourse to your housbande, (whose healthe by the sufferance of God, I haue now well restored) am my self falne into a Feuer so extreame, as neither Galen, Hypocrates, Auicen, Plinij, nor any other that euer gaue rules of Phisicke, could yet prescribe a Medicine for the malladie, or diet to suppresse the humour that feedes it: I shall not neede to vse long circumstaunce in the matter, knowyng your wisedome to bee suche, that you can well conceiue the somme of all my greef, it is your beautie that is like to breede my bane, and hath alreadie driuen me into the greatest depth of daunger, vnlesse some plaintes of pitie maie preuaile, to yeeld remorse to hym, that vowes hymself to doe you seruice duryng life.

Mistres Doritie seing the matter sorted out as she looked for, could tell wel enough how to handle maister Doctor, and to make hym the more eger, she delaied him of with doubtfull speeches, but yet fedde hym still with suche entising and pleasaunt countenaunces, that ministred greate hope of comforte to his desease, she aunswered thus.

And could you then finde in your harte (Maister Doctor) to deceiue your very freend of his deare and louyng life, how can you offer hym so manifest an iniurie, to whom you are so lately linckt in so great a league of freendship, as is betweene my housband and your self, I can not thinke maister Doctor, that it is good wil that hath caused you to moue this suite vnto me, but rather to see how I were disposed, or peraduenture you vse these wordes for exercise sake, knowing the fashion of you men to bee suche, as by praising of our beautie, you thinke to bring vs into a fooles paradize, y we will giue credite straight waie, that you loue vs so soone as you shall but tel vs the tale: but for my part (Maister Doctor) although I want wit to encounter you with wordes, so likewise I want will to beleue any

thing

thing that you haue saide, to be otherwise thē wordes of course. These speeches did ingender suche a nomber of swetee and sowre alterations in Maister Doctor, that for his life he wist not how to vnderstand them: one while thei were like to driue hym to dispaire: an other while thei somethyng quieted hym with hope, but in the ende determining to follow what he had begonne, he saied.

Sweete Mistres, most humbly I desire you to accompt of me, not according to my desertes, which as yet are none at al, but according to the dutiful seruice, whiche hereafter I vowe faithfully to doe vnto you, and for the better testimonie of my wordes which (as you saie) seeme to be of such ordinary course, I desire no other credite maie bee giuen them, then shall be agreeable to my deedes, when it shal please you to commaund: but alas for the iniurie whiche you speake of, that I should offer to your housband, who in deede I make accompt to be my very freende, what is he I praie you, that is able to prescribe lawes to loue? And as loue is without law, so is it without respect, either of freende or foe, father or brother, riche or poore, mightie or weake, vertuous or vicious: the exāples are so many & generall, that I should but waste the time to repeate thē. But (Mistres Doritie) I protest the very cause that maketh me to moue this matter vnto you, is for no ill wil that I beare to your housband, but for the good will I beare to your swete self, you maie vse your housbande as your housbande, and me as your freende, glad to standeat reuersion, when your housebande maie take his fil of the banket, and be glutted with more then enough: farther, if you make so greate accompt of your housbandes good liking as you saie, what wiues be euer better beloued, or more made of by their housbandes, then those that haue discretion to helpe their frendes whē thei need. But what sottish opinion is this, whiche so many doeth holde, that thei thinke it so great an iniurie for a man, to seeke the wife of his freende, when he is attached by loue, whose arrest, neither Goddes nor men haue bin euer able to resist. But I praie you (Mistres Doritie) if I might aske you this question, would you not thinke your good wil better bestowed vpō your house-

bandes freende then his foe, if you loue your houſbande, I am ſure you wil ſaie I haue reaſon, what ſhould I longer trouble you then with circumſtances: I knowe you are wiſe, and now I deſire you for the good will that you beare to your houſebande, to pitie me his freende, whom I truſt you will reſtore with one drop of mercy, & the rather for your houſbands ſake.

How thinke you Gentlewoman, bee not theſe gentle perſwaſions to be vſed by a Doctor, Marie he was no Doctor of Deuinitie, and therefore you neede not followe his doctrine, vnleſſe you liſte your ſelues; but this pitifull Gentlewoman, ſeyng Maiſter Doctor at ſuche deſperate pointes, for feare of damning of her owne ſoule, that ſo deare a freend to her houſbande as Maiſter Doctor was, ſhould periſhe and bee ſo wilfully caſt awaie through her default, ſhe receiued hym for her freend, and ſo I praie God giue them ioye.

But it fortuned afterwardes, this Gentlewoman to light into the companie of a Lawyer, who perceiuing this Dame to be of ſuche excellent beautie, ioyning himſelf ſome thing nere her, he ſaied: Gentlewoman, although I haue no ſkill in the arte of Paintyng, yet aſſure your ſelf, your forme and paſſyng beautie, is ſo ſurely engrauen and fixed in my mynde, that although your ſelf were abſent, I could drawe your perfect counterfecte, ſauing that I thinke all the Apothecaries in this Citie, were not able to furniſhe me with colours, to make the perfect diſtaine of the beautie in your face.

Miſtres Doritie knowing whereto theſe ſpeeches pretended, anſwered: In deede ſir, it ſhould ſeeme you would proue a paſſyng Painter, that can ſo cunnyngly Painte foorth with wordes, that whiche I knowe is too farre vnworthie of ſo excellent a floriſhe, as you would giue it. Miſtres (q. the Lawier) if I haue committed any offence, in theſe woordes whiche I haue ſpoken, it is in that I haue taken vpon me to praiſe your beautie, and not able to giue it ſuche due commendations, as I ſee it doeth deſerue, the ſight whereof doeth ſo captiuate my affections, and hath ſo creepled all my ſences, that it hath cauſed me in maner to forgette my ſelf, no maruaile then though my tongue doth faile, and is not able to expreſſe the perfectiõ

of you, vnto whom with vowe of continuall ſeruice, I ſubiect my life, liuing, and libertie, if it pleaſe you to accept of it.

This Gentlewoman, that had yet but one freend to truſt vppon, beſides her houſbande, beganne to thinke that ſhoꝛe was no ſoꝛe, and therfoꝛe determined not to foꝛſake his frendlie offer, but firſt ſhe demaunded of hym of his facultie, and what trade of life he vſed, to which he aunſwered, that he was a Gentleman appertaining to the Lawe. It maie well bee ſo (q̄ ſhe) foꝛ I perceiue by your experience, that this is not the firſt Plea that you haue framed. And yet beleeue me (q̄ the Lawyer) I was neuer brought befoꝛe to pleade at Beauties barre, but ſith my happe is ſuche, I humblie holde vp my handes, deſiryng to be tried by your courteſie and myne owne loyaltie, contenting my ſelf to abide ſuche dome and iudgement, as it ſhall pleaſe you to appoinct, beeyng the cheef and Souereaigne Iudge your ſelf, ſhe replyng, ſaied: Seeing you haue conſtituted me to giue Sentence at my pleaſure, it is not the office of a good Iuſticer, to be partiall in his owne cauſe, and therefoꝛe this is the hope you ſhal looke foꝛ at my handes, that if hereafter in your deedes, I ſhall ſee as plaine proofe of perfecte good will, as your woꝛdes by pꝛetence impoꝛte likelyhood of earneſt Loue, you ſhall finde me ready to render ſuche recompence, as ſhall fall out to your owne contentation and likyng. This comfoꝛtable aunſwere, very well pleaſed hym, and within a very little ſpace after, he ſo handeled the matter, that he had entered his action in her Common place. Thus what betweene Maiſter Doctoꝛ on the one ſide, who was ſtill miniſtryng of Phiſicke vnto her, ſo long as there were any Drugges remaiuyng in his Stoꝛehouſe, and the Lawyer on the other ſide, who ſufficiently enſtrueted her with his Lawe: thei vſed ſuche haſt vnto this Gentlewomans companie, that the one beganne to growe ſuſpicious on the other, and eche of them deſirous to haue her ſeuerall to hymſelf, beganne in the ende to enuaigh the one againſt the other: the Doctoꝛ againſt the Lawier, and the Lawier againſt the Doctoꝛ, and to tel her to her face what thei ſuſpected, the one againſt the other. But Miſtres Doriſie beeyng very angrie with them bothe, that

would so narrowlie looke into her doynges, did thinke it had been sufficient for reasonable men, that she had receiued them into her fauor, and as often as it had pleased them to come, she welcomed them as themselues did desire, and what can a man desire any more, then to drinke so often as he shall be a thirst: But with faire speeches she contented them bothe for a tyme: but she thought in the end, to finde a remedie for that mischief.

And thus it fell out, that a Souldiour, who was lately returned from the warres, I gesse about the same tyme, that Kyng Henry the fift was returned, from the winnyng of Agincourt feelde: this Souldiour I saie, hauyng it out about the streates of the Citie (as commonly the custome of Souldiours is, to spend more in a moneth, then thei get in a yere (as he roomed to and fro, and fortuned to espie this blasing starre lookyng out at a windowe, was sodainly stroken into a great maze, to see this Lampe of light, then euer he had been in the feelde, to see the Ensignes of his enemies, and was so farre ouercharged with her loue: that but for feare to haue been marked by the passers by, he would haue stoode still gazyng and lookyng vpon her: but learnyng in the ende, that she was the Mistres of the house, he began to deuise how he might make her vnderstande the feruencie of his Loue, on whiche he determined to write vnto her: But then he knewe not how to beginne his Letter, because Souldiours are very seldome accustomed to endite, especially any of these louyng lines: And to speake vnto her, he was likewise to learne how to vse his teatmes, neither wiste he how to come into her presence, but you shall see Fortune fauoured hym: For in an Euenyng as he passed through the streate, she was sittyng alone in her doore to take the aire, and commyng vnto her, not knowyng for his life how to begin his tale: In the ende, Mistres (q he) I praie you is your housbande within: No surely sir (q she) he is abroade in the Toune, but I knowe not where: And I would gladly haue spoken with hym (q the Souldiour) if he had bin within: Beleeue me sir he is not within (q she) but if it please you to leaue your arrande with me, at his commyng home I will shew hym your minde. In faith Mistres (q the Souldiour)

my arrande is not greate, I would but haue craued his helpe in chusyng me a wife, because I perceiue he hath some experiẽce in the facultie, or els I think he could neuer haue chosen so well for hymself. If your arrande be no other then this (q Mistres Doritie) you may at your owne leisure come and doe it your self, and as for my housbandes experience that you speake of, although peraduenture it bee not fittyng to your fancie, yet I am well assured that he hath made his choyce of suche a one, as he himself very well liketh. I beleue it wel (q the Souldiour) and if without offence I might speake it, I sweare so God help me, I like his choise so wel, that I would thinke my self more then a thousand times happie, if I might bee his halfe, or if my vnworthinesse deserued not so greate a portion, I would craue no more then your self would willingly bestowe on me, accordingly as you should see me able to deserue it. Why sir (q Mistres Doritie) I doe not vnderstande wherevnto your speeches doeth tende, neither what parte you would haue me to giue you, when I haue alreadie bestowed of my housbande, bothe my hande, my harte, my minde, and good will. Alas Gentlewoman (q the Souldiour) these bee none of them that I would craue, there is yet an ouerplus whiche you haue not yet spoken of, whiche if you please to bestow of a Souldiour, I should think my self the happiest man aliue, whose loue and good likyng towards you is suche, that I trust in tyme to come, your self will iudge me worthie, for my well deserupng zeale, to haue descrued hire. Souldiours are seldome seene (q Mistres Doritie) to marche vnder the banner of Venus, but what so euer you bee, doe you thinke to ouerthrowe my vertues, with the assault of your wanton perswasions, or would you make me beleeue that you loue me as you say, whē you haue no more respect to the hurt of my soule. Gentlewoman (q the Souldiour) I am not able to encounter you with wordes, because it hath not been my profession, nor trainyng vp, but if you doubte of my loue and good likyng: Please it you to make triall, commaund any thyng that your self shall thinke requisite, whiche if I doe not performe to the vttermost, then esteeme my loue in deede to be but feined, and

where you thinke that I goe aboute to seeke the preiudice or hurte of your soule, beleeue me I neuer ment it.

Mistres Doritie, who had been wel acquainted before with many suiters, had neuer been apposed with suche a rough hewen fellow, that was so blũt and plaine, aswell in his gesture, as in his tearmes: Began to think with her self, that he might well be a Souldiour, for she knewe that thei had little skill in the courting of Gentlewomen, yet she perceiued by his countenaunce, the vehemencie of his loue he bare vnto her, and perceiuing his plainnesse, she began to thinke him more fitter for her diet, then either Maister Doctor, or Maister Lawier, that could not be contented the one with the other, when she gaue them bothe so muche as thei could craue, and therefore thinkyng with her self, that to loose any longer tyme were but a poinct of folly, takyng the Souldiour by the hande, she ledde hym vp into a Chamber, where other speeches were passed beeweene them in secrete, whiche I could neuer yet vnderstand, and what thei did farther when thei were by themselues, gentlewomen I praie geesse you, but this I must aduertise you of, that before thei came forth of the Chamber againe, the Souldiour had pleased Mistres Doritie so well, that bothe Maister Doctor, and Maister Lawier, were put quite out of conceipt, so that from that tyme forwardes when thei came of their visitation, the Gentlewoman was not wel at ease, or she had company with her, or she was not at home, that thei could no more speake with her: whiche tourned them bothe into a wonderful agonie. The Doctor had thought she had forsaken him for the loue of the Lawier: The Lawier he thought as muche by the Doctor, that in the ende not knowyng otherwise how to spit out their venime against her, thei deuised eache of them a letter, whiche thei sent her. The first of these letters deliuered vnto her, came from the Doctor, whiche letter he left vnpointed of purpose, because that in the readyng of it, it might bee poincted two waies, and made to seeme either to her praise or dispraise, but Mistres Doritie her self in the readyng of it, poincted it as I haue set it doune, and followeth in this sorte.

And who would haue thought mistres Doritie, that for the louyng

louyng aduertisementes giuen you by your freend, you could so lightly haue shaken hym of, if I burdened you with any thyng that might seeme greeuous vnto you, thinke it was Loue that ledde me vnto it, for that I protest inwardly in my mynde, I neuer did esteeme you otherwise then for as honest a gentlewoman as liues this daie in Bridewell. I haue heard saie some haue been scourged more vpon euill will, then for any desertes whereof thei might iustly be accused, so if it be my happe to suffer vndeserued penaunce, I must impute it to my owne misfortune, but yet contrarie to my expectation, considering how I haue euer taken you to bee giuen in your conditions to practise vnseemely, filthie, and detestable thynges: I knowe you haue euer abhorred to liue chastly, decently, and orderly: you haue euer been trained vp to be wanton, proude, and incontinent: you neuer tooke delight in that was good, honest, or commendable: you wholie gaue your self to leudenesse, lust, and Lecherie: you were an open enemie to vertue: a freend to vice. What should I saie, I doe but waste the time in the setting of you forth, and therefore will leaue you like as I found you.

This Letter brought Mistres Doritie into suche a furie when she had perused it, that she sware by no Beggers she would be so reuenged vpon the Doctor, that she would make hym a spectacle to all the Philitions in the worlde, how thei should abuse an honest gentlewoman while thei liued. And in the middest of her Melancholie, her dearest freende the Souldiour happened to come in, whom she made partaker of all her secretes, shewyng him the Letter whiche Maister Doctor had sent her: and as thei were deuisyng how to vse reuengement, a Messenger was knockyng at the doore, to deliuer a letter from the Lawyer, the tenure whereof followeth in this maner.

Maie this bee the rewarde of my true and faithfull Loue, whiche so firmely I haue borne thee? Or is this the delight of thy daliaunce, whiche so many tymes thou haste vsed with me? So carelesly to shake me of, as though I had committed some notable abuse, when in deede I haue loued thée a greate

deale more, then I perceiue thou art worthie of. Oh feminine flatterie. O fained faunyng. O counterfect courtesie. O deep dissimulation: But what hope is otherwise to be looked for in these Kites of Cressides kinde. Or what constancie maie any man thinke to finde in a woman? No no, if a man maie generally speake of their sexe, you shall neuer finde them but counterfect in their courtesie, fained in their frendship, dissembling in their deedes, and in all their actions moste daungerous, for men to deale withall: For if she haue a faire face, it is euer matched with a cruell harte, their heauenly lookes with hellishe thoughtes: their modest countenaunces, with mercilesse mindes: thei haue witte, but it is in wiles: if thei loue, it is too vehement: when thei hate, it is to the death. But good God, with how many fopperies are thei accustomed to feede fooles, I meane suche as bee Louemakers and Suiters vnto them, whom thei delaie with as many deuises, as thei be in number that seekes to serue them. Some thei lure with lookes: some thei practise with promises: some thei feed with flattery: some thei delay with daliance: some thei winde in with wiles: some thei keepe with kisses: some thei diet with dissimulation. One must weare her Gloue, an other must weare her Garter, an other must weare her Coulers: an other shall weare the spoile of as muche as she can get from all the rest by cousonage, and yet to see how daintie these darlinges, wil seeme to those that bee not acquainted with their customes, were able to dashe a pong man out of countenaunce: I warrant you, thei can make it more nice then wise: more coie then comely, more fine then honest. And to whom doe thei make the matter most daungerous, but to thē that deserueth best to be rewarded: For where thei see a man that is drouned in affection towardes them, ouer him thei will triumphe, and can tell how to ride the foole without a snaffle: one while thei will crosse him with froward language, then againe comforte hym with some fained looke. Now she driues him into desperation with frounyng face, by and by she baites hym againe with banquettes of vncertaine hope, suche is their euill nature (as I saie) that thei wil shewe them selues moste squemishe and daintie, to hym that loues

them

them moſte entirely, and him that ſeekes them leaſt diſhoneſtly, hym thei rewarde with their coldeſt courteſie. For better proofe, lette a man ſeeke to winne one of theſe tender peeces, that goes for a maide, honeſtly, and in the waie of Marriage, and I warrant you ſhe will make the matter more coye and nice to hym that meanes good earneſt, then to an other that comes but to trie and proue them. And what ſignes of ſhamefaſtneſſe wil thei ſeeme to make, when a man doeth but touch them: fainyng them ſelues to be too young, when (in deede) if thei once paſt the age of fifteene yeres (if thei were not afeard of breeding of bugges in their belly) by their good willes thei would neuer be without the company of a man. Thus to conclude, their nature is openly to ſcorne all men, bee their loues neuer ſo honeſt, and ſecretly to refuſe no man be his luſt neuer ſo leude. Full aptly did Salomon in his Prouerbes compare you to Wine, that can make vs ſo dronken with your deuiſes, that notwithſtandyng we ſee the ſnares with our eyes, which you haue ſette to entangle vs, wee can not ſhunne the baite, which we knowe will breede our bane. Thus muche Miſtres Doritie, I haue thought good to ſignifie vnto you, whoſe diſcourteſie at this tyme hath cauſed me ſo generally to enuaie againſt your whole Sexe, not otherwiſe mindyng to accuſe your ſelf perticularly, knowyng that if you ſhould otherwiſe haue vſed me then you haue, you ſhould haue degreſſed and ſwarued quite from your kinde, and ſo I leaue you.

Gentlewomen I beſeeche you forgiue me my fault, in the publiſhyng this infamous letter, I promiſe you I doe but ſignifie it accordyng to the copie, whiche this vnhappie Lawier ſent to Miſtres Doritie, and when I had well conſidered the blaſphemie that he had vſed againſt your ſexe, I cut my penne all to peeces, wherewith I did copie it out, and if it had not been for the hurtyng of my ſelf, I promiſe you I would haue cut and mangled my owne fingers, wherewith I held the pen while I was writing of it: and truſt me according to my ſkil, I could well haue founde in my harte, to encounter him with an aunſwere in your defence, but then I was interrupted by an other as you ſhall well perceiue. For the Souldiour,

whiche you haue heard ſpoken of, that was remainyng with Miſtres Doritie, when he had peruſed this Letter, was put into a wonderfull chafe, and in the middeſt of his furie, he vttered theſe woꝛdes.

Ah moſte vilde and blaſphemous beaſt, what art thou that with ſuche exclamations, goeſt about to defame thoſe, whom by all honeſt humanitie and manhood, we be willed ſpecially to loue, honour, and reuerence, what art thou? A man, a deuill oꝛ a ſubtill Lawyer, yea ſurely, and ſo thou maieſt well be, and herein haſte thou ſhewed thy ſelf no whit at all to degreſſe from thy pꝛofeſſion. Foꝛ as at the firſt the Lawes were conſtituted to miniſter Juſtice, and to giue euery one his right, ſo now are thei made by the pꝛactiſe of a nomber of Pettie foggers, the inſtrumentes of all iniquitie and wꝛong. Euen ſo that woꝛthie ſexe, whiche at the firſt were giuen vnto man by the almightie God himſelf, to be his cheefeſt comfoꝛt and conſolation. See here the pꝛactiſe of a wicked Caitife, who with his eloquence would perſwade vs, that thei were our greateſt ruine and deſolations: Ah wicked wꝛetche that thou art, how thinkeſt thou to eſcape, thus to blowe foꝛthe thy blaſphemie, againſt thoſe bleſſed ones, whom God hath perfited aboue all other creatures. Foꝛ at their firſt creation, thei were made of the moſte beſt and purified mettall of man, where man hym ſelf was framed but of ſlime and dꝛoſſe: what reaſon then that beeyng at the firſt framed moſte pure and perfect creatures, but that thei ſhould continue their firſt perfection to the ende of the woꝛlde. And like as at the firſt thei were made moꝛe excellent then man, where ſhould wee now ſeeke foꝛ grace, vertue, and goodneſſe, but onely in the feminine ſexe, accoꝛdyng to their ſinguler creation.

I truſt this is ſo euident that there is no man able to denaie it, and enough to pꝛoue, that as women at the firſt were created moſte perfecte, ſo thei haue ſtill remained the ſtoꝛehouſe of all grace vertue and goodneſſe, and that if there be auy thyng founde in vs men that is woꝛthie of commendation, we are onely to giue thankes to women from whom wee receiue it, as being deſcended from out their entrailes: but with how

how greate and manifolde miſeries, ſhould we men be daiely afflicted, were it not for the comforte wee finde at womens handes, for beſides that by their induſtrie we be netified, made more clendly, and kept ſwete, who otherwiſe of our ſelues we ſhould become to bee moſte filthie and lothſome creatures, ſo at all tymes and ſeaſons thei be ſo neceſſarie and conuenient aboute vs, that it were impoſſible for vs to bee without their bleſſed companies. Firſt, in our health thei content vs with their familiaritie, in our ſickneſſe thei cheriſhe vs, in our mirth thei make it more abounde, in ſorrowe their companie doeth beguile our penſiue thoughtes, in pleaſure thei be our cheefe delightes, in paine their preſence breedeth cõfort to our grief, in wealth what greater treaſure then to enioye our beloued, in want what greater wealth then a louing and faithful wife, in peace we labour ſtill to get their likyng, in warres thei make vs ſhewe our ſelues more valiaunt: but how is it poſſible that women ſhould behaue themſelues, but that there are ſome wil finde fault with them: Firſt, if ſhe bee familiare, we iudge her to be light, if ſhe ſeeme any thing ſtraunge in her cõuerſation, ah we ſaie ſhe is a daungerous Dame, if merrie, wee thinke her to be naught, if ſad, we ſaie ſhe is more graue then honeſt, if ſhe be talkatiue, wee ſaie ſhe is a tarlyng houſwife, if ſilent, we ſaie ſhe is a ſheepe, if clendly in her apparell, we ſaie ſhe is proude, if plaine or homely, we ſaie ſhe is a doudie or a ſlut, if thei denaie vs their curteſie when we ſue vnto them, wee ſaie thei be cruell Tigers, Beares, and Bugges, if thei haue compaſſion of vs, we diſcredit them amongſt our companions.

But ſee here the cunnyng of a Caitife, that would wreaſt the wordes of Salomon to the diſpraiſe of women, becauſe in his Prouerbes he compareth them to Wine, but to interprete the wordes of Salomon by Salomon himſelf: in an other place of the ſame Prouerbes, he willeth Wine ſhould bee giuen to comforte thoſe that bee feeble and weake, now compare theſe places together and ſee what harme he hath doen to women, and in my opinion, he could not more aptly haue made a compariſon, for as Wine is a comforte to thoſe that are feeble and weake, ſo are women our greateſt ſolace, both in ſickneſſe and

in

in health: But if any will saie that Wine maketh vs wonken, and from reasonable men to become more brute then beastes. I aunswere that the fault is not to bee imputed to the Wine, but to the beastlinesse of him that taketh more then enough, for there is nothyng so precious for our behookes, but by our owne abuse we make it seeme most vile & lothsome: And thus graunting maister Lawier his comparison to be true, he hath doen little hurt, sauing he hath shewed himself a diligent scholer to his Maister the deuill, who is father of all lyes, in maintaining so manifest a lye against suche harmelesse creatures.

There were many other speeches pronounced by this Souldiour in the behalfe of women, whiche I haue forgot to recite. But I praie Gentlewomen how like you by this Soldiour, doe you not thinke hym worthie a Sargantes fee for his aunswere: in my opinion, you ought to loue Souldiours the better for his sake.

But to retourne to Mistres Doritie, those two letters had so vexed her, that there was nothing in her minde but how she might be reuenged. Her freende the Souldiour promised for her sake, that he would so cudgill both Maister Doctor, and the Lawier, that thei should not in one moneth after be able to lift their armes to their heades, sauyng he wist not how to get them into a place conuenient, for that it was daungerous to deale with them in the open streates. Mistres Doritie giuing him twentie kisses for his courtesie, told him she would deuise to bring them into some place where he might worke his wil.

Presently after, Mistres Doritie sent for Maister Doctor, whom she knewe very well how to handle, and in a milde maner she began greatly to blame hym, that being wise as she knew him to be, would so rashly iudge of her, for that he might wel knowe that there was some greate cause, that moued her to vse him as she had doen, otherwise then he had coniectured: and thus with many other like speeches, she so smothed the matter with Maister Doctor, that she made hym beleeue her housbande had some suspition in their familiaritie, and that by his commaundement she had abstained his compame for a tyme, the which (Maister Doctor (q she) I did for no euill will

that

that I beare you, but for a tyme to bleare my housebandes eyes, thinkyng in the ende so to haue handled the matter, that wee might haue continued our accustomed freendship, without any maner of suspition: And then drawyng forthe the letter, whiche the Doctor had sent her (she saied): But see Maister Doctor your good opinion conceiued in me, loe, here the reward that I haue for my courtesie bestowed of you, thus to raile and rage against me, as though I were the moste notable strumpet in a Countrey.

The Doctor knowyng in what forme he had wright the letter, and desirous againe to renue his late acquaintaunce, aunswered, that he neuer writte letter vnto her, whereby he had giuen any occasion for her to take any greef. No haue: (quoth Mistresse Doritie) read you then here your own lines, takyng hym the letter, whiche the Doctor as I tolde you before, had left vnpointed, and therefore in the readyng, he pointed it after this maner.

And who would haue thought (Mistresse Doritie) that for the louyng aduertisementes giuen you by your freende, you could so lightlie haue shaken hym of, if I burdeined you with any thing, that might seme greeuous vnto you, thinke it was Loue that ledde me vnto it, for that I protested inwardlie in my mynde, I did neuer esteeme you otherwise, then for as honest a Gentlewoman as liues at this daie. In Bridewell I haue heard saie, some haue been scourged more vpon euill wil, then for any desertes whereof thei might iustlie bee accused: So if it bee my happe to suffer vndeserued penaunce, I must impute it to myne owne misfortune, but yet contrarie to my expectation, considryng how I haue euer taken you to be ginen in your conditions: to practise vnseemely, filthie, and detestable thinges, I knowe you haue euer abhorred: To liue chastlie, decently, and orderlie, you haue euer been trained vp: to bee wanton, proude, and incontinente, you neuer tooke delight: In that was good, honest, or commendable, you wholie gaue your self: to lewdnesse, luste, and Lecherie, you were an open enemie, to vertue a freende, to vice: what should I saie, I doe but waste the tyme in settyng you forthe, and therefore

will leaue you like as I founde you.

I praie you Mistresse Doritie (quoth the Doctor) where is this railyng and raging you speake of, I trust I haue written nothyng that might discontent you. Mistresse Doritie perceiuyng the Knauerie of the Doctor, and seeyng the matter fell out so fitte for her purpose: First giuyng him a freendly busse she saied. Alas my deare freende, I confesse I haue trespassed, in misconsteryng of your lines: But forgiue me I praie you, and now haue compassion of her, whose loue towarde you is suche, that it is impossible for me to liue, without your good likyng, and seyng that my housebandes Jelousie is so muche, that you can haue no longer accesse to my house, but it muste needes come to his eare, by suche spie and watche as he hath laied, neither my self can goe abroade to any place, but I am dogged, and followed by suche as he hath appointcted: But now if your loue be but half so muche towardes me, as I trust I haue deserued, and hereafter doe meane to requite. I haue alreadie deuised a meane, how for euer I might enioye my desired freend, without either let or molestation of any one, seme he neuer so muche to be offended at the matter.

The Doctor the gladdest man in the worlde to heare these newes, aunswered: And what is it then that should make you stagger, or doubt of the frendship of your louyng Doctor, no not if thereby I should hazard the losse, bothe of life & goodes.

Alas (quoth Mistresse Doritie) GOD defende I should wourke you so greate a preiudice, and I beseeche you vse no more suche speeches vnto me, that I should goe aboute to put you into any suche perill, the remembraunce whereof is more grecuous vnto me, then if I had felte the force of a thousande deathes, and now behold my determination, and what I haue deuised: You haue a house not farre hence standing in the feeldes, whiche you keepe for your solace, and recreation in the time of Sommer: to this house I haue deuised, how you maie so secretly conuey me, that you maie there keepe at your pleasure to your owne vse, and to my greate contentation, where I maie at pleasure enioye hym, more dearly beloued vnto me, then the balles of mine owne eyes. And herewithall she gaue

him

hym an other Iudas kisse, that the Doctor desired her of all frendship, not to be long in her determination, for that he was readie to followe her direction, when soeuer it would please her to commaunde: yea, if it were presentlie he was readie.

Mistresse Doritie, who haue driuen the matter to that passe she looked for, saied: Male Maister Doctor, there resteth yet an other thyng, my housebandes Iealousie (as I tolde you) is suche, that there must bee greate circumspection vsed, in the conueighyng of me awaie, and therefore giue care to that I haue deuised: I haue in my house a certaine Male with stuffe, that is left with me, to be sent by the Carriers into the Countrie, whereof my housebande dooeth knowe verie well, this stuffe I will cause to be secretly taken forthe, and to be sent to the Carriers, trust vp in some other thing, without any knowledge to any, sauyng to my Maide, that shall worke this feate her self, whose trustinesse I knowe to bee suche, as there is no suspition to bee had in the matter, the whiche when she hath doen, she shall trusse vp me in thesame Male, then see that you faile not to morowe in the Euening about eight of the clocke, disguised in a Porters weede, to come to my house to enquire for thesame Male, whiche you shall saie, you will beare to the Carriers, my Maide who shall of purpose, bee readie to waite for your comming at the bower, shall make no bones to deliuer you this Male, and thus without either doubt or Iealousie of any one, you maie carrie me into the feeldes, where for your better ease you maie take me forthe, and disguising our selues wee maie walke together, to your house aforesaied, where I maie remaine without any maner of suspition, or knowledge to any, so long as it shall please your self.

O moste excellente deuise (quoth the Doctor) I haue this matter alreadie at my fingers endes, and I warraunte you, you shall see me plaie the Porter so cunninglie, that how many so euer I meete, there shall none of them be able to suspect me: Thus with a feined kisse that she againe bestowed of him, for that time thei departed.

Mistresse Doritie, in like maner sent for the Lawier, whom she handled in like sorte, as she had doen the Doctor, makyng

hym beleeue, that her houſebandes Jcloufie was ſuche, as ſhe durſt no moꝛe come in his companie: But of her ſelf ſhe loued hym ſo entirely, that ſhe would hazard any thyng foꝛ his ſake, and becauſe he ſhould the better beleeue it, to moꝛrowe (quoth ſhe) in the after noone, my houſebande will be foꝛthe of the doꝛes, wheꝛefoꝛe J pꝛaie you faile not about thꝛee of the Clocke to come and viſite me, when wee ſhall haue laiſure to diſpoꝛte our ſelues, to our better contentation: Many like enticyng wooꝛdes ſhe vſed, whiche ſo perſwaded the Lawier, then dꝛeadyng no bad meaſure at all, he pꝛomiſed her not to faile, but he would keepe his bowꝛ: and thus departed verie ioyfull, that he had againe recouered his Miſtreſſe. And the nexte daie, euen as it had ſtroke thꝛee of the Clocke, he was knockyng at the dooꝛe of this Gentlewoman, who lookyng foꝛ his commyng, was readie to receiue hym, and vp thei goe together to a Chamber, whiche ſhe had appoincted foꝛ the purpoſe: where foꝛ a tyme ſhe dalied hym of with deuiſes: And ſodainlie her maide (accoꝛding as her Miſtreſſe had giuen her inſtructiõs) came haſtelie to the Chamber dooꝛe, callyng her Miſtreſſe, ſaiyng: that her Maiſter was come in, and had aſked foꝛ her: Miſtreſſe Doritie, who was not to learne to plaie her parte, ſeined to be ſtriken into a wonderfull feare, alas: quoth ſhe to the Lawier) foꝛ the loue of GOD keepe your ſelf ſecret foꝛ a time, that J maie go doune and rid him awaie, if it be poſſible, and thus goyng her waie doune, ſhe ſhuttes the doꝛe after her.

The Lawier who was readie to beraie hym ſelf foꝛ feare, crepte vnder the Bedde, where ſhe lette hym alone, the ſpace of an bowꝛ, and then commyng vp into the Chamber, and could not ſee hym, ſhe beganne to muſe what was become of hym: he hearyng one was come in at the Chamber dooꝛe, beganne to pꝛie out vnder the Beddes feete, and perceiuyng by the ſkirte of her goune who it was, with a faint voice he ſaid: Alas my deare what newes, is your houſebande gone: Ah my louing freende (quoth ſhe) J was neuer ſo hardlie beſet ſith J was boꝛne: my houſebande is come home with thꝛee oꝛ fowꝛ of his freendes, whiche he mette withall in the Citee, and bee come out of the Countrie of purpoſe, to make merrie with

him,

him, and here thei be appoincted this night to Suppe, and hether bee come to their beddes, so long as thei remaine in the Citee, and this Chamber is appointed for twoo of them to lie in, that for my life I knowe not what shifte to make, nor how to conueigh you hence.

Alas (quoth the Lawier) then am I vtterlie vndoen, for the loue of GOD, deuise some meanes tonueigh me out of the house, for I would not remaine all night in this perplexitie, no not for all the golde in the worlde. Mistresse Doritie makyng a little pause, sodainlie as though she had an inuention, but euen then come into her hedde, she saied.

I haue this onely remedie left, here is in the house a Male full of stuffe, whiche should this night be sent to the Carriers: my deuise is therefore to take forthe the stuffe, and laie it aside till sometime the next weeke, when I will make shift to send the stuffe awaie verie well, and you shalbee presentlie packed vp in this Male, whiche my Maide shall doe while I am belowe with my housebande and his freendes, and so causing a Porter to bee sent for, he shall carrie you to your Chamber, or to any other place, where it shall please your self, so that my housebande seyng this Male goe forthe of doores, will thinke it is the stuffe, whiche he knoweth this night should be sent.

No better deuise in the worlde (quoth the Lawier) and let the Porter conueigh this Male to my Chamber, you knowe where, and deliuer it to my man, as sent from his Maister, and will him to giue him fortie pence for his labor.

The matter thus determined, Mistresse Doritie sent vp her Maide with this emptie Male, wherein she trussed vp the Lawier, and there she left him lyng from fiue of the Clocke, vntill it was past eight, and in the Sommer season the weather beeyng verie hotte, the Lawier had like to haue been smothered where he laie: at the length according to poinctmente, comes maister Doctor disguised like a right porter, with a long gaberdine doune to the calfe of his legges, and he enquires for a Male that should goe to the Carriers, yea Marie (quoth the Maide) if you please to come in, it is readie for you, the Doctor beyng a good sturdie lubber, tooke vp the Male verie

eaſilie for feare of bruſing the Gentlewomans tender ribbes, whom he had thought he had vpon his backe, and thus forth of dooꝛes he goes, takyng the next waie towardes his lodgyng.

Miſtreſſe Doritie with her beloued Souldiour (whom ſhe had made priuie to her deuiſe) ſtoode where ſhe might ſe Maiſter Doctoꝛ in his Poꝛters weede, goyng with his carriage, whereat when thei had awhile ſpoꝛted them ſelues, the Souldier followed maiſter Doctoꝛ an eaſie pace, but onely to kepe the ſight of him, and the Doctoꝛ he tooke his waie through the ſtreates with a maine pace, till he had recouered the feeldes, where looking about him, to ſee what companie was ſtirryng ſawe no bodie nere hym but the Souldier, whom he did not knowe, and then croſſyng the waie from the common pathes, he came to the ſide of a Bancke, and beeyng wearie (as he was not to be blamed, conſideryng the knauiſhe burthen that he had boꝛne vpon his backe) he laiyng doune the Male tenderlie vppon the ſide of the Bancke) ſeeyng no bodie but the Souldier, who was but a little diſtaunce from hym, ſaied. Ah my ſweete wenche, I can ſee no creature ſtirryng in all the feeldes, but one man whiche is commyng this waie, who ſoone as he is paſte, I will vndoe the Male.

The Lawier in the Male, when he felt the Poꝛter laie him doune, was in a good hope, that he had been in his own chamber, but hearing by theſe ſpeeches, that he was in the feeldes, began to cõiecture aſſuredly, that the Poꝛter had ſpoken thoſe woꝛdes to ſome woman that was in his companie, with whõ he was confederate, foꝛ the ſtealyng of ſuche thinges as thei ſhould finde in the Male, and that when thei ſhould open the Male and finde hym there, thei would not ſticke to cutte his thꝛote foꝛ feare, leaſt he ſhould bewraie them, and foꝛ the onely ſpoile of ſuche thinges as he had aboute him, that the Lawier was in ſuche a perplexitie, that he wiſt not foꝛ his life what he might doe: one while he had thought to haue cried out foꝛ help then he thought it would the ſoner bꝛing him to his ende, and as he continued thus in the middeſt of his muſe, the Souldier was come to the place, and ſpeakyng to the Doctoꝛ, he ſaied: Poꝛter it ſeemeth thou haſte been knauiſhlie loden, foꝛ I perceiue

ceiue thou art very hot, but what hast thou in the male, I pray thee, that thou art carrying this waie so late in the Euening. Marie (quoth the doctor) I haue ware there suche as it is, hast thou ware knaue (quoth the Souldier) is that a sufficiente answere, what ware is it, mennes ware, or womens ware. Sir I knowe not (quoth the Porter) I haue but the cariyng of it to a gentlemans house that is here hard by, well (q the Souldier) vndoe your trusse, for I will se what wares you haue there, before you and I departe, why sir (q the Porter) should I bee so bold to vndo a gentlemans male, that is deliuered me in trust to be caried, no sir you shall pardon me, if you were my father, and herewithall he tooke the male vpon his backe, and began to go his waies. But the Souldier knowing better what was in the Male, then the Porter himself that caried it, and beyng prouided for the purpose with a good Cudgell, let driue halfe a dosen blowes at the Male, as it laie vpon his backe so surelie, that the Lawier cries out, alas, alas, alas. Why Porter (quoth the Souldier) haue you quicke wares in your Male, no meruaile you were so daintie in the shewyng of it.

Here withall the Doctor laied doune his Male, and kneelyng doune to the Souldier, saied. Ah sir for the loue of God bee content, and I will not let to confesse the whole truthe vnto you: I haue a Gentlewoman in my Male, whiche I haue stolne from her housebande, and seyng you to be a gentleman but yong in yeres, and impossible but that you shsuld loue the companie of a faire woman, beholde, I will deliuer her vnto you, to vse at your pleasure, and when you shall see tyme, to restore her vnto me againe, desiryng you sir of all curtesie, to seeke no other displeasure against vs. You haue saied well (q the Souldier) but is she suche a one as is to bee liked, faire, freshe, and yong. Trust me sir (q the Doctor) if she bee not as faire, and well liking as any Dame within the walles of this Citee, make me an example to all other, how thei shal dissemble with a Gentlemanne suche as you are. Thou saiest well (q the Souldier) and now I thinke long till I haue a sight of this Paragon, whiche thou haste so praised vnto me. You shall see her straight waie (q the Doctor) and herewithall he

began

beganne to vnlase the Male with greate expedition, whiche whē he had vnlosed at the one ende, that he might come to the sight of this Gentlewomans face (as he had thought) he saied to the Souldier, see here the sight which you so muche desire, and pullyng the ende of the Male open with his handes, the Lawier thruste forthe his hedde, and looked with suche a piteous countenaunce, as though he had been readie to be turned of the Ladder: But the Doctor seeyng a face to appeare with a long Bearde, was in suche a maze, that he could not tell in the worlde what he might saie. The Souldier who had neuer more a doe then to forbeare laughter, to see how these twoo, the one beheld the other: Saied to the Doctor, and is this the faire Gentlewoman that thou haste promised me, haste thou no bodie to mocke but me, that with suche commendations thou giuest praise to a woman, whereby to sette my teeth an edge, and then in thende thus to delude me? But I will teach thee how to plaie the knaue againe while thou liuest, and here withall he laied on with his Cudgell, sparyng neither hedde, shoulders, armes, backe, nor breast, and so bee bumbasted the Doctor, that for the space of a quarter of a yere after, he was not able to lift an Eurinall so hie as his hedde.

The Lawier who had nothyng out of the Male but his hedde, seeyng this fraie, struggeled so muche as he could, to haue gotten forthe, and to haue runne awaie, while the Porter was a beatyng, but it would not bee, his armes were so surely laced doune by his sides, that for his life he could not get them forthe.

The Souldier, when he had throughlie requited Maister Doctors Knauerie, that he had vsed against his beloued Mistresse in his letter, lefte hym, and beganne to bende hymself towardes the Lawier: The Lawier seyng the Souldier comming, had thought verely that he had been some good fellowe that was walkyng there so late, to haue taken some prey, said: Oh sir, for the loue of God spare my life, and take my purse, to whom the Souldier aunswered: naie villaine, my commyng is neither to take thy life nor thy purse, but to minister reuengemente for thy large speeches, whiche like a discourteous

wretche

wretche thou haste vsed against a woman, and there with all laied vpon hym so long as he was able to fetch any breath, and then callyng the Porter vnto hym, he saied: Let these wordes whiche I minde to speake suffice for a warning to you bothe, if euer I maie learne that any of you hereafter this do vse any misdemeanour towardes any woman, either by word or writing, assure your selues that although I haue but dallied with you at this tyme, I wil deuise some one meane or other to minister reuenge, that all suche as you bee, shal take an example by you. And thus I leaue you, goyng his waie to his sweete harte, tellyng her the whole discourse how he had spedde, by whom he was welcomed with a whole last of kisses, &c.

And now to returne to those two that were left in the feeldes, as you haue heard: the Doctor takyng good vewe of the Lawyer, knewe hym very well, but the Doctor was so disguised in his Porters apparell, that the Lawyer did not knowe hym, but saied vnto hym, a mischeef light of al suche Porters, that when thei bee put in trust with carriages into the Citie, will bring them into the feeldes to suche banquettes as these, Marie q the Doctor a mischeefe take all suche burthens, that when a man hath almost broken his back with bearing them, and then shall receiue suche a recompence for his labour as I haue doen: Villaine (q the Lawyer) why diddest thou not carie me to my chamber as thou wert willed when thou diddest receiue me, I would I had carried thee to the Gallowes (q the Doctor) so I had escaped this scouryng, but I perceiue this banquet was prepared for vs bothe, and here withall with muche adoe he got of the Porters coate, and makyng hymself knowne to the Lawyer, eache of them conferred with the other, how cunningly thei had been dealt withall, and did think it not best for them any farther to deale in the matter, for feare of farther mischeefe, but with muche adoe got them home, where the Lawyer kept his bedde very long after: But the Doctor tooke Sparmaceti, and such like thinges that be good for a bruse, and recouered hymself in a shorte space.

Now it fell out afterwardes that this Souldiour, who liued in greate credite with Mistres Doritie (as he had well de-

ſerued) was imployed in the Kynges warres againſt forraine foes, with a greate number of others, where he ſpent his life in his Princes quarrell, & Miſtres Doritie, ſorrowyng a long tyme the loſſe of ſo faithfull a freende, ſeeyng the diuerſitie of men, that ſhe had made her choiſe amongſt three, and had foūd but one honeſt, feared to fall into any further infamie, contented her ſelf to liue orderly, and faithfully with her houſbande, all the reſt of her life, and her houſband who neuer vnderſtood any of theſe actions, loued her dearely to his dyeng daie.

And now to ſaie ſomethyng of the other brother and his wife, which as you haue heard was ſuche a notable ſcold, that her houſbande could neuer enioy good daie, nor merie houre: She was ſuche a deuill of her tongue, and would ſo croſſebite hym with ſuche tauntes, and ſpightfull quippes, as if at any tyme he had been merrie in her companie, ſhe would tell hym his mirthe proceeded rather in the remembraunce, of that ſhe had brought hym, then for any loue that he had to her ſelf: if he were ſadde, it was for greefe ſhe was not dead, that he might enioye that ſhe had. If he vſed to goe abroad, then he had been ſpendyng of that he neuer gott hymſelf. If he taried at home, ſhe would ſaie it was happie he had gotten ſuche a wife, that was able to keepe hym ſo idely. If he made any prouiſion for good cheare, or to fare well in his houſe, ſhe would bid hym ſpende that whiche he hymſelf had brought. If he ſhewed hym ſelf to be ſparyng, then ſhe would not be pincht of that whiche was her owne. Thus doe what he could, all that euer he did was taken in the worſt parte: And ſeyng that by no maner of faire meanes he was able to reclaime her: in the ende he deuiſed this waie, hymſelf with a truſtie freende that he made of his counſaile, got and pinioned her armes ſo faſt, that ſhe was not able to vndoe them, and then puttyng her into an old Peticoate, whiche he rent and tattered in peeces of purpoſe, and ſhakyng her heire looſe about her eyes, tare her Smock ſleeues that her armes were all bare, and ſcratchyng them all ouer with a Bramble that the bloud followed, with a greate chaine about her legge, wherwith he tied her in a darke houſe that was on his Backſide, and then calling his neighbours a-

bout

bout her, he would seeme with greate sorrowe to lament his wiues distresse, tellyng them that she was sodainly become Lunatique, whereas by his gesture he tooke so great greefe, as though he would likewise haue runne madd for companie. But his wife (as he had attired her) seemed (in deede) not to be well in her wittes, but seyng her houshandes maners, shewed her self in her conditions to bee a right Bedlem, she vsed no other woordes but Cursynges and Bannynges, cryng for the Plague and the Pestilence, and that the Deuill would teare her houshande in peeces: the companie that were aboute her, thei would exhorte her, good neighbour forget these idle speeches, whiche doeth so muche distemper you: and cal vpon God and he will surely helpe you. Call vpon God for helpe (q the other) wherein should he helpe me, vnlesse he would consume this wretch with fire & brimstone, other helpe I haue no neede neede of. Her houshande, he desired his neighbours for Gods that thei would helpe him to praie for her, and thus altogether kneelyng in her presence, he began to saie (Miserere) whiche al thei saied after him, but this did so spight and vexe her, that she neuer gaue ouer her railing, and ragyng against them all. But in the ende, her houshand who by this shame had thought to haue reclaimed her, made her to become from euil to worse, and was glad hymself in the ende, cleane to leaue, and to get hym self from her into a straunge Countrey, where he consumed the rest of his life.

Thus to conclude, besides the matter that I meane to proue, Men maie gather example here, when thei goe a Wiuyng, not to choose for beautie without vertue: nor for riches without good conditions. There bee other examples if thei be well marked, worth the learnyng: bothe for men and women, whiche I leaue to the discretion of the reader.

FINIS.

Of Gonſales and his vertu-ous wife Agatha.

The Argument of the ſixt Hiſtorie.

¶Gonſales, *pretending to poiſon his verteous wife for the loue of a Courtiſane, craued the help of* Alonſo *a Scholer ſomethyng practiſed in Phiſicke, who in the ſteade of poyſon gaue hym a pouder, whiche did but bryng her into a ſounde ſleepe duryng certaine houres, but* Gonſales *iudging (in deede) that his wife had been dead: cauſed her immediatly to be buried: The Scholer againe knowyng the operation of his Poulder, for the greate loue he bare to* Agatha, *went to the Vault where ſhe was entombed, aboute the hower that he knewe ſhe ſhould awake. When after ſome ſpeeches vſed betweene them, he carried her home to his owne houſe, where ſhe remained for a ſpace, in the meane tyme* Gonſales *beyng married to his Courtiſane, was by her accuſed to the Gouernour for the poiſonyng of his firſt wife, whereof beeyng apprehended he confeſſed the fact, and was therefore iudged to dye, whiche beyng knowne to* Agatha, *ſhe came to the Iudge, and clearyng her houſbande of the crime, thei liued together in perfect peace and amitie.*

THere was ſometyme in the Citie of Siuill in Spaine, a Gentleman named Gonſales, who though he were a man of yeres ſufficient to be ſtaied, and to giue ouer the wãton pranckes of youthfull follie. Yet was he by nature ſo enclined to followe his luſtes, and withall ſo variable and ſo vnconſtant, that he

he suffered hymselfto be ruled wholy by his passiõs, and measured all his doyng rather by his delightes and pleasures, thẽ by sounde discourse and rule of reason. This Gentleman fallyng in loue with a Gentlewoman of the same Citie, whose name was Agatha, sought all the meanes he could to haue her to wife. And her freendes although thei were wel enough enformed of the disposition of Gonsales, whereby thei might haue feared the entreatie of their kinswoman, for that thei knewe hym very riche, and her dowrie not to be very greate, thei were well content to bestowe her vpon hym: and thought that thei had in so doyng placed her very well. But before the first yeare after their Marriage was fully expired, Gonsales followyng his wonted humour, and waxyng wearie of loue, grewe to desire chaunge, giuyng thereby a notable example for women to learne how little it is to their commoditie or quiet, to matche themselues to suche, that be rather riche then wise: and how muche it were better for them to be married to men, then to their goodes.

For beeyng come to soiourne in that Streate wherein he dwelt, a notable Courtesane, who to the outward shewe was very faire, though inwardly she was moste foule, as she that vnder a goodly personage, did couer a wicked and dangerous minde, corrupted with all vices (as for the most parte al suche women doen.) It was Gonsales chaunce to be one of the first that fell into those snares, whiche she had sett for suche simple mens mindes, as haunt after the exteriour apparance of those thinges, whiche their senses make them to delight in, and not considering the daunger whereunto thei commit themselues, by followyng of their disordinate appetites, doe suffer themselues to be entrapped by suche leude Dames: Among which this (forsoothe) was one that was of singuler skill to captiue mens mindes, which by experience and by the naturall disposition of her mynde, bent wholy to deceipt and naughtinesse: had learned a thousand giles and artes, whiche waie to allure men with the pleasauntnesse of her baites. Wherefore after he was once entangled with her snares, he fell so farre beyond all reason, and past al beleef, to dote vpon this Strumpet that

he could finde no reſt, nor no contentment, but ſo long as he was with her. But ſhe beeyng as diſſolute a Dame as any liued in the worlde, and as greedie likewiſe of gaine as euer any was of her profeſſion, would not content her ſelf with Gonſales alone, but yeelded vnto as many as liſt to enioye her, if thei came with their handes full, and ſpared for no coſt to reward her liberally. Whiche thyng was vnto hym, that was ſo beſotted on her, ſo greeuous and ſo intollerable, that nothyng could be more.

There was at that ſame tyme, a Scholer in the Citie that ſtudied in Phiſicke: with whom Gonſales had familiar acquaintance, and the Scholler therby hauyng acceſſe and converſation in his houſe, began ſo feruently to bee in loue with Agatha his wife, that he deſired nothyng ſo earneſtly in the worlde as to enioye her, and to winne her good will. Wherefore hauyng (as I haue ſaied) free acceſſe to her houſe, and to declare his affection vnto her without ſuſpition, he ceaſed not by al the meanes he was able to deuiſe, to ſollicite and to procure her to yeeld vnto his deſire. With his endeuour and earneſt ſuite, although it were vnto Agatha, noiſome and diſpleaſant, as ſhe that was diſpoſed to keepe her ſelf honeſt: and that ſhe could in that reſpect haue been very glad, that he would forbeare to frequent her houſe. Yet knowyng her houſbande to be a man of no very great ſubſtance, and but ſlenderly ſtuffed in the hedpeece: and that he delighted greatly in the familiaritie of the Scholler, ſhe forced her ſelf to endure with pacience, the importunate moleſtation, whiche he ſtill wearied her withall. Takyng from hym neuertheleſſe all hope, to obtaine at any tyme any fauour at her handes, and cuttyng hym ſhorte from all occaſions, as muche as ſhe could, whereby he might haue cauſe to moleſt her, or to looke for any thyng to proceede from her, that were leſſe then honeſt.

The Scholler perceiuyng that his owne trauaile, to win her affection was but labour loſt, thought beſt to trie if by the allurement or perſwaſion of any other, he might happly moue her to ſhew her ſelf more courteous, and fauourable vnto him. Wherefore hauyng founde out an olde Mother Elenour, a

diſciple

diſciple of the Spaniſhe Celeſtina, ſuche a one as was moſte cunnyng and ſkilfull in mollifyng of womens myndes, to worke them afterwarde to receiue the impreſſions of their louers, he cauſed her to take acquaintaunce of Agatha, and by degrees (as though ſhe had been moued with pittie and compaſſion of caſe) to declare vnto her the loue whiche her houſebande bare vnto the Courtiſane: and to ſhew her how vnworthie he was that ſhe ſhould be true vnto hym. And in the ende paſſing from one ſpeech to an other, ſhe ſaied plainly vnto her, that it was a great follie, ſince her houſband did take his pleaſures abroade with other women, to ſtand to his allowances, and to take the leauyng of his Strumpets, and therewith to bee content: and that, if ſhe were in her caſe, and had a houſebande that would ſtrike with the ſworde, ſhe would vndoubtedly requite hym and ſtrike with the ſcabberde, ſo ſhe counſelled her to doe likewiſe.

Agatha beyng a very diſcrete Gentlewoman, and louyng her houſbande as an honeſt woman ought to doe, ſaied to her in aunſwere of her talke, that ſhe would bee right glad to ſee her houſbande to be ſuche a man as ſhe wiſhed hym to be, and as he ought to be. But that ſince ſhe ſawe it would not be, and that he could not frame hym ſelf thereto, ſhe would not take from hym or barre hym of that libertie, whiche either the cuſtome of the corrupted worlde, or the priuiledge that men had vſurped vnto themſelues, had giuen vnto them. And that ſhe would neuer for her parte violate or breake that faithe whiche ſhe had giuen hym, nor ſlacke or neglect that care and regard of her honour, whiche all women by kinde and nature ought to haue, as the thyng that maketh them to be moſte commended throughout the world, let her houſbande doe what he liſt, and like and loue as many other women as pleaſed hym. And that ſhe thought her ſelf ſo muche the rather bounde ſo to doe, becauſe he did not in the reſt miſuſe her any waie, or ſuffer her to want any thing that reaſonably ſhe could deſire or craue at his handes: and for that ſhe had not brought hym in effect any other dowrie worthie to bee accompted of then her honeſtie. Wherefore ſhe was fully reſolued neuer to varie from that

conſtant

conſtant reſolution. And finally ſhe wyng her ſelf ſomewhat moued and ſtirred with Choler, ſhe tolde her that ſhe maruailed at her not a little (that beyng a woman of thoſe yeres) that ſhe ſhould rather repꝛehend and chide yong folke, if ſhe ſhould ſee them ſo bent, then encourage them to euil, & muſed muche ſhe could finde in her harte to giue her ſuche counſell: whiche ſhe aſſured her was ſo diſpleaſant and ſo vngratefull, as if frō hence foꝛthe ſhe durſt pꝛeſume to ſpeake thereof any moꝛe, ſhe would make her vnderſtande perchaunce to her ſmarte, how ill ſhe coulo awaie with ſuche pandarly pꝛactiſes.

This olde Hag hauyng had her head waſhed thus without ſope, departed from Agatha, and came vnto the Scholler and tolde hym in bꝛeefe how ill ſhe had ſped, and in what ſoꝛte the honeſt Gentlewoman had cloſed her mouth, whereof the ſcholer was very ſoꝛie: yet foꝛ all this, he thought he would not giue ouer his purſute, imagining that there is no hart ſo hard oꝛ flintie, but by long loue, by perſeuerance, pꝛaier, and teares, maie in the ende be mollified and wꝛought to be tender.

In this meane ſeaſon, Gonſales ſtill continuyng his olde familiaritie with the Scholler, and hauyng made hym pꝛiuie of the loue he bare vnto the Courtiſane, and what a greefe it was vnto him to ſee her enioyed by any other then by himſelf: one daie among other talke betweene them of that matter, he ſaied vnto the Sholler, that it neuer grieued him ſo muche to haue a wife as it did then, foꝛ that if he had bin vnmaried he would haue taken Aſelgia (foꝛ ſo was the Courtiſane named) to be his wife, without whom he could finde no reſt noꝛ quiete in mynde, and ſo long as euery man hath a ſhare with him in her, he accompted himſelf as il as if he had had no parte in her at all. And thereto ſaied further, that aſſuredly if it were not foꝛ feare of the Lawe, he would eaſe hymſelf of that burden by riddyng of Agatha out of the woꝛlde. Thereunto replied the Scholler, ſaiyng that in deede it was a greeuous thyng foꝛ a Gentleman to be combꝛed with a wife, whō he could not finde in his harte to loue, and that in ſuche a caſe, he that did ſeeke the beſt waie he could to deliuer himſelf of that yoke, was not altogether vnexcuſable, though the rigoꝛ of Juſtice had appointed

poincted ſeuere puniſhementes, for ſuche as violentlie ſhould attempt, or execute any ſuche thing. But that men that were wiſe, could well enough finde out the meanes, whiche waie to worke their intentes, without incurryng any daunger of the Lawe for the matter. Whiche language in deede he vſed vnto hym, but to feede his humour, and to ſee whereunto that talke in fine would tende: And according to his deſire before it was long. Gonſales hauing vſed the like ſpeeches, twoo or three times, and ſtill findyng him to ſoothe his ſayyng, tooke one daie a good harte vnto him, and brake his minde vnto the Scholer at large, and in plaine termes, to this effect.

Alonſo (for that was the Scholers name) I doe aſſure my ſelf, and make full accoumpt, that thou art my faſte freend, as I am thyne, and I doubte not but that the freendſhip, whiche is betweene vs, doeth make thee no leſſe ſorie then my ſelf, to ſee me greeue with this continuall trouble of minde, wherein I liue, becauſe I can not compaſſe to take this woman, whom I loue ſo dearelie to bee my wife, and by that meanes come to haue the full poſſeſſion of her vnto my ſelf, whiche is the thing I doe deſire aboue all other thinges in the worlde. And for as muche as I dooe perſwade my ſelf, that by thy meanes, and with the helpe of thy profeſſion, I maie happ to finde ſome remedie for my greef. I haue thought good to tell thee a conceit, whiche I haue thought on oftentimes: wherein I meane to vſe thee and thy aſſiſtaunce, for the better accompliſhing of my purpoſe in that behalfe. Aſſuring my ſelf that thou wilte not refuſe, or denie me any furtheraunce, that thy ſkill maie afforde me, or ſhrinke and drawe backe, from the performyng of any freendlie offer, whereby I maie come by to finde ſome eaſe of minde, and bee deliuered of that intollerable tormente of ſpirite, wherewith I am oppreſſed, for the loue of this Aſelgia, in whom I haue fixed and ſet all my ioyes and delightes. Thou ſhalte therefore vnderſtande, that I am determined aſ ſone as I can poſſible, to ridde my handes of Agatha my wife and by one meane or other to cauſe her to dye: And I haue been a good while aboute the execution of this my intent, but becauſe I could neuer yet deuiſe the beſte waie to performe it,

ſo that her death might not bee laied vnto my charge. I haue delaied it hetherto, and perforce, contente to beare the heauie burthen of my greeued minde till now, whiche hence forward I am reſolued to beare no longer, if thou wilte accordyng to my truſt in thee, and as the freendſhip whiche is betweene vs doeth require, graunt me thy furtheraunce and helping hand. Wherefore, knowing that through thy long ſtudie in Phiſick thou haſte attained ſo greate knowledge, that thou canſte deuiſe a nomber of ſecretes, whereof any one might be ſufficient to bryng my purpoſe to effect. I doe require thee to fulfill my deſire in that behalfe, and to giue me thy helpe, to bryng this my deſire to paſſe: Whiche if thou dooe, I will acknowledge my ſelf ſo long as I ſhall liue, to be ſo muche bound vnto thee, that thou ſhalt commaunde me, and all that I haue, in any occaſion of thine, as freelie and as boldlie, as thou maieſt now any thing that is thine owne.

The Scholer when he had heard Gonſales and his demaunde, ſtoode ſtil awhile, as muſing vpon the requeſt, and in the meane while diſcourſed with himſelf, how by the occaſion of his intent, and reſolution of Gonſales, he might perhappes finde out a waie, to come by the poſſeſſion of Agatha, and to haue her in his handes, and at his deuotion. But keepyng ſecrete his thoughtes and meanyng, he made hym anſwere: That true it was, that he wanted not ſecret compoſitions, to make folke die with poiſon, ſo as it could neuer bee diſcerned by any Phiſition, or other, whether the cauſe were violent, or no, but that for twoo reſpectes he thought it not good to yeeld vnto his requeſte. The one, for that Phiſicke and Phiſitions, were appointed in the worlde, not to bereue men of their liues, but to preſerue them, and to cure them of ſuche diſeaſes, as were daungerous and perillous vnto them: The other, becauſe he did foreſee, in what ieoperdie he ſhould put his owne life, whenſoeuer he ſhould diſpoſe himſelf to worke any ſuche practiſe, conſidering how ſeuerelie the lawes haue preſcribed puniſhementes for ſuche offences. And that it might fall out, how warelie ſo euer the thing were wrought, that by ſome ſeldome or vnlooked for accident, the matter might bee diſcoue-

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red(as for the moste parte it semeth, that God will haue it)in whiche case he were like to incurre no lesse danger then Gonsales,and bothe(assured)without remission to lose their liues. And that therefore,he would not for the first respect,take vpon hym to doe that, whiche was contrarie to his profession: nor for the seconde,hazard his life to so certaine a daunger,for so hatefull a thing,as those practizes are to all the worlde.

Gonsales verie sorie to heare his deniall,told hym that the Lawes and dueties of freendship,doeth dispence well enough with a manne,though for his freende he straine sometyme his conscience. And therefore,he hoped that he would not forsake hym,in a cause that cõcerne him so waightily as that did. And that neither of those twoo respectes (if thei were well considered)ought to be able to remoue him from pleasuryng of his freend. For that now adaies,aswell were thei accompted and esteemed Phisitions, that killed their Pacientes, as thei that did cure them:and because the thyng beeyng kepte secrete betweene them twoo alone,he needes not to doubte,or feare any daunger of his life by the Lawe . For if it should by any mischaunce happen,that he should be imputed,or burthened with poisoning of his wife,he assured him that he would neuer whilest he had breathe , confesse of whom he had the poison , but would rather suffer his tongue to bee pulled out of his hedde, or endure any torment that might bee deuised.

The Scholler at the laste seemyng to bee wonne, by the earnestnesse of his petition: Saied,that vppon that condition and promes,of not reuealing him at any time,he would be cõtente,rather to shewe hymself freendlie vnto hym,then a true professour of his Science,or an exacte regarder of his conscience:and that he would doe as he would haue him.

And hauyng lefte Gonsales verie glad and ioyfull , for that his promes,he wente home, and made a certaine composition of mixture of pouders, the vertue whereof was suche , that it would make them that tooke any quantitie thereof, to sleape so soundlie , that thei should for the space of certaine howers seme vnto all men,to be starke dedde. And the next daie he retourned to Gonsales,and to deliuer it vnto him,saiyng: Gon-

ſ ales, you haue cauſed me to dooe a thyng, I proteſte I would not dooe it for my life: But ſince you maie ſee thereby, that I haue regarded more your freendſhippe, then my ductie, or the conſideration of that, whiche is honeſt and lawfull: I muſt require you eftſones to remember your promeſſe, and that you will not declare to any creature liuing, that you haue had this poiſon of me.

Whiche thing Gonſales veric conſtauntlie vpon his othe, did promiſe him againe, and hauyng taken the pouder of him, aſked hym in what ſorte he was to vſe it: And he tolde hym, that if at Supper, he did caſte it there vpon her meate, or into her brothe, ſhe ſhould die that night following, without either paine or torment, or any greeuous accidentes, but goe awaie euen as though ſhe were aſleape. That Euenyng at Supper tyme, Gonſales failed not to put the pouder into his wiues potage, who hauyng taken it, as ſone as Supper was doen, feelyng her ſelf verie heauie and drouſie, wente to her Chamber, and gat her to bedde (for ſhe laie not with Gonſales, but when he liſte to call he, whiche had been verie ſeldome, ſince he did fall into loue with the Strumpet) and within an howre after, the operation of the pouder tooke ſuche force in her bodie, that ſhe laie as though ſhe had been dead, and altogether ſenceleſſe, Gonſales in like ſort when he ſawe his time went to his bedd, and lyeng all that night with a troubled mynde, thinkyng what would become of Agatha, and what ſucceſſe his enterpriſe would take: the morning came vpon him, before he could once cloſe his eyes, whiche beyng come he roſe, not doubtyng but that he ſhould aſſuredlie finde his wife dedde, as Alonſo had promiſed him. And as ſoone as he was vp, he wente out of his houſe, and ſtaied but an howre abroad, and then he retourned home againe, and aſked his Maide, whether her Miſtres were vp or no. The Maiden made him aunſwere, that ſhe was yet a ſleape: And he makyng as though he had merualled at her long lyeng in bedde, demaunded her how it happened that ſhe was ſo ſluggiſhe that Mornyng, contrarie to her cuſtome, whiche was to riſe euery Mornyng by breake of the daie, and bad her goe and wake her, for he would haue her to giue hym

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ſome thing, that laie vnder her Keyes. The wenche according to her Maiſters commaundement, went to her Miſtres bedde ſide, and hauyng called her once or twiſe ſomewhat ſoftelie, when ſhe ſawe ſhe waked not, ſhe laied her hande vppon her, and giuing her a ſhagge, ſhe ſaied withall, Miſtres awake, my Maiſter calleth for you. But ſhe lyyng ſtill, and not awakyng for all that the Maide tooke her by the arme, and beganne to ſhake her good and harde: and ſhe not vnderſtandyng, neither aunſwering, nor ſtirring hande or foote. The Maide returned to her Maiſter, and tolde hym that for aught ſhe could doe, ſhe could not gette her Miſtres to awake. Gonſales hearyng the Maide to ſaie ſo, was glad in his minde: But feiyng himſelf to bee buſied about ſomewhat els, and that he regarded little her ſpeeche, he bidde her goe againe, and ſhake her till ſhe did waken. The Maide did ſo, and rolled and tumbled her in her bedde, and all in vaine: wherefore commyng againe vnto her Maiſter, ſhe ſaied vnto him, that vndoubtedlie ſhe did beleeue, that her Miſtres his wife was dedde, for ſhe had founde her verie colde, and rolled her vp and doune the bedde, and that yet ſhe ſtirred not. What? dedde q Gonſales, as if he had been all agaſte and amazed, and riſing therewithall, he wente to her beddes ſide, and called her, and ſhaked her, and wrong her by the fingers, and did all that might be, as he thought, to ſe whither ſhe were aliue: But ſhe not feeling any thing that he did, laie ſtill like a dedde bodie, or rather like a ſtone.

Wherfore, when he ſawe his purpoſe had taken ſo good effecte, to diſſemble the matter, he beganne to crie out, and to lament, and to deteſt his cruell Deſtinie, that had ſo ſoone bereued him of ſo kind, ſo honeſt, and ſo faithful a wife: and hauing in th'ende diſcouered her bodie, and finding no ſpot or marke, whereby any token or ſigne of poiſonyng might be gathered, as one that would not ſeme to omit any office of a louing huſbande, he ſent for the Phiſition to looke vpon her, who hauing vſed ſome ſuche meanes, as he thought meete to make her come to her ſelf; finally, ſeyng her to remain vnmoueable, and without ſence, concluded, that ſome ſodaine accident had take her in the night, wherof ſhe had died, and for dedde he left her.

At whiche his reſolution, though Gonſales were very glad yet to the outward ſhewe, declaryng himſelf to be verie ſorie, and full of woe and heauineſſe, he behaued hym ſelf in ſuche cunning ſort, as he made all the worlde beleeue, that he would not liue long after her. And hauyng called her freendes, and lamented with them her ſodaine death, and his miſfortune: in fine, he cauſed her Funerall to bee verie ſumptuouſlie and honourablie prepared, and buried her in a Vaute, whiche ſerued for a Toumbe to all his auncеſtours, in a Churche of a Frierie, that ſtandes without the Citee.

Alonſo that was verie well acquainted with the place, and had hymſelf a houſe, not verie farre from that Frierie, wente his waie that ſame Night vnto his ſaied houſe, and when he ſawe the tyme to ſerue for his purpoſe, he gatte hym to the Vaute or Toumbe, wherein Agatha was laied, with one of theſe little Lanterns, that thei call blinde Lanterns (becauſe thei tourne them, and hide their light when thei liſte.) And becauſe he was a yong manne of verie good ſtrengthe, and had brought with him inſtrumentes of Iron to open the Toumbe, and lift vp the ſtone that couered it, he gat it open, and hauyng vnder propped it ſurelie: He went into the Vaute, and tooke the woman ſtraight waie in his armes, mindyng to bryng her out, and cartie her awaie ſo a ſleape as ſhe was. But the force and vertue of the pouder, beeyng finiſhed and ſpent, aſſone as he moued her, ſhe awaked out of her ſleape, and ſeeyng her ſelf clad in that ſorte, emong ragges and dedde bones, ſhe began to tremble, and to cry: alas where am I? Or who hath brought me hether, wretche that I am? Marie that hath your cruell and vnfaithfull houſebande, aunſwered the Scholer: who hauyng poiſoned you, to Patrie a common Strumpet, hath buried you here, wherher I come to trie if by my ſkill I could reuiue you, and call backe your ſoule by thoſe remedies, which I had deuiſed vnto your bodie againe: Whiche if I could not haue doen, as I intended, I was reſolued to haue died herebye you, and to haue laied my dedde bodie here by yours, to reſte vntill the latter daie, hopyng that my Spirite ſhould in the meane while haue come and enioyed yours, where euer it had

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been. But since the Heauens haue been so fauorable vnto me, as in this extreame daunger wherein you were, to graunte suche vertue vnto the remedies, whiche I haue vsed towarde you, as the whiche I haue been able to kepe vndissolued, your gentle Spirite with your faire bodie. I hope (my deare) that you will hencefoorthe consider, what the affection of your wicked housebande hath been toward you, and how greate good will, and by consideration thereof, discerne and resolue which of vs twoo hath beste deserued to be beloued of you.

Agatha findyng her self in that sort buried in deede, did easily beleeue the truthe whiche the Scholer told her, and to her self concluded, that her housebande had shewed hymself in her behalf, a man of all other moste cruell and dissoiall. Wherfore tournyng her self toward the Scholer, she saied vnto hym.

Alonso, I can not deny, but that my housebande hath been to me, not onely vnkinde, but cruell also: nor I can not but cõfesse, that you haue declared your self to be moste louyng and affectioned toward me: and of force I must acknowledge my self beholding vnto you, of no lesse then of my life, since (alas) I se my self here emong dedde bodies buried aliue. But for as muche, although my housebande haue broken his vowe to me, I haue not yet at any tyme failed my faithe to hym. I doe require you, that if you desire that I should esteme this kind and louing office of yours, as it deserueth to be esteemed, or make accompt of this life, whiche you haue giuen me, you will haue due regard and consideration of myne honestie, and that you will not by offering me any villanie (whiche neuertheless I can not any waie misdoubt, where I haue alwaies found so muche and so great courtesie) make this your courteous and pitifull acte to be lesse commendable, and praise worthie then it is. Whiche if you do bridle your vnlawfull and sensuall appetite and desire, will remain the moste vertuous and worthie of honor and fame, that euer courteous Gentleman hath doen for a miserable woman, since the worlde beganne.

Alonso failed not with affectuall and manifest argumẽtes to perswade her, that her housebande had now no more right or title to her at all, and that although he had, yet if she were

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wiſe, ſhe ſhould not commit her ſelf vnto his courteſie again, ſince by this mortall token, he had giuen her a ſufficient teſtimonie of his rancker, and euil will towardes her, whereby ſhe might well enough bee aſſured not to eſcape, when ſoeuer ſhe ſhould reſolue, to put her ſelf againe into his handes: and that therefore ſhe was not to make any accoumpte of hym, but to ſhewe her ſelf thanckfull, for ſo greate a benefite as ſhe had receiued, and to requite hym ſo with her fauour and courteſie, as he might now in the ende, attaine to gather the frute of his long and conſtaunt good will, and of his trauell ſuſtained for the ſaffegarde of her life. And with thoſe woordes bendyng himſelf toward her, he would haue taken a kiſſe of her lippes. But Agatha thruſtyng hym backe, ſaied vnto hym againe. If my houſebande (Alonſo) haue broken thoſe bandes, wherwith I was knitte vnto hym by Matrimonie, through his wicked and leude demeanour, yet haue not I for my parte diſſolued them, neither will I at any tyme, ſo long as I ſhall liue. As for committing my ſelf vnto his courteſie, or going any more into his handes, therein I thinke it good to followe your aduiſe: not that I would bee vnwillyng to liue and dwell with him, if I might hope to finde hym better diſpoſed: but becauſe I would bee lothe to fall eftſones into the like daunger and greeuous perill. And as for requiting you, for this your commendable trauaile in my behalf, I knowe not what better recompence I am able to giue you, then to reſt bound vnto you for euer, and to ackdowledge my ſelf beholdyng vnto your courteſie for my life: whiche obligation if it maie ſatiſfie you, I will be as glad and as content, as I maie be in this miſerable ſtate wherein I am. But if your meanyng perchaunce be, that the loſſe of mine honeſtie, ſhould bee the reward and hire for your paines, I doe beſeche you to depart hence out of this tombe, and to leaue me here incloſed, for I had rather die here thus buried quicke, through the crueltie of my houſband, then through any ſuche compaſſion or pitie to ſaue my life, with the loſſe of mine honour and good name.

The Scholer by thoſe woordes, perceiued well enough the honeſt diſpoſition of Agatha, whiche he wondered at, conſide-

ryng

ryng that the terror of death it selfe was not able once to moue her from her faithfulnesse and cõstancie of mind. And though it were greeuous vnto hym to finde her so stedfast, yet hopyng that by tyme in the ende he might ouercome her chast and honest purpose, aunswered: that he could not but commende her for her disposition, though he deserued a kinder recompence of his long and feruent loue, and she a more louing and faithfull housband. But since she was so resolued, he would frame him selfe to be content with what she would, and not craue of her any thyng that she would not willyngly graunt hym to haue. And therewith helpyng her out of the Sepulcher, he led her home vnto his house, and left her there with an olde woman that kept his house, to whom he recomended her, and whose helpe he was assured of, to dispose the good will of Agatha towardes hym, and the next mornyng returned into the Citie.

Gonsales after a fewe daies, seeming not to be able to liue without a wife to take care of his familie, wedded that honest Dame Aselgia, and made her Mistres of hymselfe and all that he had. This his newe Mariage so sone contriued, caused the freendes of Agatha to maruaile not a little, and to misdoubt that the sodaine death of their kinswoman, had not happened without some misterie. Neuertheless, hauing no token nor euidence or proofe, thei held their peace. But Gonsales hauyng his desired purpose and liuyng with his newe wife, it befell vnto hym (through Gods iust Iudgement with this his ioly Dame) as it chaunced to Agatha with hym before. For Aselgia that was neuer wont to feede with so spare a diet, as she that had neuer bin contented before without greate chaunge, nor had not bin vsed to that kinde of straigtnesse (which Gonsales growing ielous of her, began to keepe her in) but had alwaies liued at libertie, and with suche licentiousnesse, as women of her profession are wont to doe, became in shorte space to shewe her selfe so precise vnto hym, and to hate and abhorre hym in suche extreme sorte, that she could not abide to see, or heare hym spoken of. By occasion of whiche her demeanour towardes him: Gonsales to his greefe began at last, to knowe and to discerne what difference there is betweene the honest

and carefull loue of an honeſt wife, and the diſſemblyng of an arrant Strumpet. Wherefore one daie among the reſt, complainyng of the little loue whiche he perceiued ſhe bare hym, and ſhe aunſwcryng hym thawartly. Gonſales fallyng into heate of Choler, ſaied angerly vnto her: haue I thou naughty packe poyſoned Agatha for thy ſake, that was the kindeſt and the louingeſt wife that euer man had, and is this the reward I haue and the requitall thou yeeldeſt me, to ſhowe thy ſelf euery daie more deſpightefull and crabbed then other? Aſelgia hauyng harde hym and noted well his wordes, tooke holde of them, and ſtraight waie thought that ſhe had founde the waie to rid her ſelf of Gonſales: wherefore ſhe reueiled his ſpeeches vnto a Ribalde of hers, ſuch a one as ſupplied her want of that which Gonſales alone nor ten ſuche as he were able to ſatiſfie her withall, and induced hym to appeache hym for that facte, aſſuryng her ſelf that the Lawe would puniſhe hym with no lnſſe then death, and thereby ſhe to remaine at libertie to doe what ſhe liſt againe, as ſhe had doen before. This companion accuſed Gonſales vpon his owne wordes vnto the freendes of Agatha, who hauyng had half a ſuſpition thereof before, went and accuſed hym likewiſe before ỳ Judge, or hed Magiſtrate of the Citie. Whervpon Gonſales and his woman were both apprehended and put to their examinations, to ſearche out the truth: which Gonſales being halfe conuicted by the confeſſion of the gentle peate his new wife, but chiefly grieued with the worme of his owne conſcience, and to auoyde the torment of thoſe terrors whiche he knewe were prepared for him, confeſſed flatly, affirmyng that he had poyſoned her with a poyſon whiche he had kept of long tyme before in his houſe, perfourmyng yet therein the promiſe whiche he had made vnto the Sholler. And vpon his owne confeſſion, ſentence was giuen againſt hym that he ſhould looſe his hed.

Alonſo, when he vnderſtoode that Gonſaler was condemned to dye, was very glad thereof, ſuppoſyng that he beeyng once dead, Agatha (who all this while for any thyng that the olde woman could ſaie or alledge vnto her in the behalfe of Alonſo, would neuer yeeld or conſent to any one point wherein

her

her honour might haue beene touched or spotted) should remaine at his discretion, and that she would no longer refuse to graunt hym her good will when she should see her self deliuered of Gonsales. But the daie beyng come wherein he was to be put to execution, she hauyng had inteligence of all that had passed, and knowyng that he was appoincted to dye that daie, determined with her self that she would in that extremitie deliuer her disloyall housebande, and giue hym to vnderstande how little she had deserued to bee so entreated by hym as she had been. Wherefore hauyng gotten out of Alonso his house, she hied her vnto the Citie as fast as she could, and beeyng before the Justice or Magistrate she saied vnto hym. Sir, Gonsales whom you haue condemned and commaunded to be put to death this daie, is wrongfully condemned: for it is not true that he hath poysoned his wife, but she is yet aliue, and I am she. Therefore I beseeche you giue order that execution maie be staied, since that your sentence is grounded vpon a false enformation and confession is vniust, and you maie plainely discerne by me beyng here.

When the Gouernour heard Agatha speake in this sorte, whom he had thought to haue beene deade and buried, he was all amazed and halfe afraied to looke vpon her, doubtyng that she was rather her spirite or Ghoste, or some other in her likenesse then a liuely woman in deede: for she was apparelled in a very plaine and black attyre, and was very wanne and pale by reason of the affliction which she had indured. First, for her owne il fortune, and then for the mischaunce of her housband.

In this meane while, the Sargantes and Officers had brought Gonsales before the Justice or Magistrate, to the ende that he (accordyng to the custome of the Citie) should giue them commaundement to leade hym to the place of execution, and there to fulfill his sentence vpon him. But as sone as Agatha perceiued hym, she ranne vnto hym, and takyng hym about the necke and kissing him she saied. Alas my deere housebande, whereunto doe I see you brought though your own folly and disordinate appetite which blinded your iudgement. Beholde here your Agatha aliue and not deade: who

euen in that extremitie is come to ſhewe her ſelf, that louyng and faithfull wife vnto you, that ſhe was euer.

The Iuſtice or Gouernour ſeyng this ſtraunge accident, cauſed execution to be ſtaied, and ſignified the whole caſe vnto the Lorde of the Countrey, who at that tyme chaunced to bee at Sciuill; who wonderyng no leſſe then the other at the matter, cauſed bothe Gonſales and his wife to bee brought before him, and demaunded of them how it had chaunced that ſhe hauyng bin buried for dead was now founde aliue. Gonſales, could ſaie nothyng but that for the loue he bare vnto Aſelgia he had poyſoned his wife, and that he knewe not how ſhe was reuiued againe. But Agatha, declared how the Scholer with his ſkill had deliuered her from death, and reſtored her life vnto her, but how or by what meanes ſhe could not tell.

The Lorde hauyng ſent for Alonſo, and demaunded hym of the truth, was certified by hym, how that in ſteede of poiſon he had giuen to Gonſales a Pouder to make her ſleape: Affirmyng likewiſe that notwithſtandyng the long and earneſt purſuite, whiche he had made to obtaine her loue, and the crueltie and iniurie whiche ſhe ſawe her houſebande had vſed towarde her, to put her in that daunger and perill of her life, out of whiche he had deliuered her, yet could he neuer by any perſwaſion or entreatie winne her to fulfill his deſire, or bryng her to make breache of her faithe and honeſtie. By whiche repoyte the Lorde knewe very well, that in an honeſt woman the regarde and reſpect of her honour and chaſtitie, doth farre exceede any other paſſion, for any miſerie be it neuer ſo great. And commendyng highly the loue, and conſtancie of the woman towarde her houſebande, and praiſyng the pollicie of Alonſo, he tourned hymſelf vnto Gonſales, and ſaied vnto hym: Full euill haſt thou deſerued to haue ſo good, and ſo verteous a Gentlewoman to thy wife, and in reaſon ſhe ought now rather to be Alonſo his wife then thine: Neither wert thou worthie of leſſe then that puniſhment, whiche the Lawe hath condempned thee vnto, though ſhe be yet aliue, ſince thou, aſmuch as in thee laie, haſt doen, to bereue her of her life. But I am content that her vertue and goodneſſe, ſhall ſo much be auaile-

able

able vnto thee, that thou ſhalt haue thy life ſpared vnto thee for this tyme: not for thy owne ſake, becauſe thou deſerueſt it not, but for hers, and not to giue her that ſorrowe and greefe, whiche I knowe ſhe would feele, if thou ſhouldeſt dye in that ſorte. But I ſware vnto thee, that if euer I maie vnderſtande that thou doeſt vſe her hencefoorth, otherwiſe then louingly and kindly, I wil make thee to thy greeuous paine proue how ſeuerely I can puniſhe ſuche beaſtly and heinous factes, to the example of all others.

Gonſales imputyng his former offence, to want of witte and Iudgement, made promiſe vnto the Lorde, that he would alwaies doe as he had commaunded hym. And accordyngly hauyng forſaken cleane that baggage Strumpet, that he had wedded: He liued all the reſt of his daies in good loue and peace with Agatha his wife, whoſe chaſte and conſtant mind, cauſed Alonſo wher before he loued her for her exterior beautie, euer after to reuerence her, and in maner to worſhipp her as a diuine creature, for the excellẽcie of her vertue. Reſoluyng with hymſelf that a more conſtant faith and honeſt diſpoſition could not bee founde in any mortall woman.

FINIS.

Of Aramanthus.

borne a Leper.

The Argument of the vij. Historie.

¶Aramanthus *sonne to* Rodericke *Kyng of* Tolosia, *beyng borne a Leper, was sent by his Father to the Ile of* Candy *for remedie, and by a Tempest at the Sea, the Shipp was driuen into Turkie, where she was cast awaie, and no man saued but the childe, whiche was taken vp by a poore Fisherman, and fostered as his owne sonne, and afterwards seruing the Turke in his warres, shewed himself so politique, that the Turke by his onely aduise, incroched muche vpon the Christians, and in fine, by his meane the Citie of* Tolosia *was taken, his father put in prison, and how in the ende he was knowne to be the sonne of* Rodericke.

I Shall not neede by any long circumstaunce to describe, how many troubles, tumultes, hoyles, Babbles, Murthers, Treasons, how kingdomes haue been disturbed: How many Countries laied waste: How many Cities haue been sacked: How many Townes haue beene raised, and how many mischeefes haue euer happened, sithence the first creation of the woylde, vntill this present daie, by that monsterous vice Ambition. Considering that euery Historie maketh mention, euery Chronicle beareth recorde, and euery age, tyme, and season, haue seen with their eyes, and this our tale that followeth shall some thyng make more euident.

There was sometyme remainyng in the famous Citie of Tolosia a worthie Kyng, whose name was Rodericke: who

was

was likewise espoused to a moste vertuous Queene called Isabell, and truely a happie Courte it might be called, whiche thei held, aswell for the loue that was betweene the King and Queene: as for the vertue and clemencie, wherewith bothe the one and the other were accompanied.

There was remainyng in the Courte, the Duke of Caria, who was the onely brother of Rodericke Kyng of Tolosia: This Duke beyng a greate deale more vicious then his brother was verteous, practised no other thing, but how he might come by the Kingdome of Tolosia: Knowing that there were no more betweene hym and it but the Kyng, who loued hym more dearely by a greate deale then he deserued. But it fell out the Queene Isabell was knowne to bee with childe, the Duke very lothe that any other heires should steppe in betwene hym and home, deuised to poyson the Queene, & so had thought to haue doen, by as many as the Kyng should haue taken to wife (if at any tyme thei proued to be with childe) but by the prouidence of God, this poison tooke no great effect in the Queene, saueyng that when she was deliuered of a sonne, the child was found to be in a notable Leprosie, and the Kyng hauing intelligence of an excellent Phisition, (but especially for the curyng of that desease) was remainyng in the Ile of Candy, prepared a Shipp presently to sende the child, which by the extreamitie of a contrary winde, was driuen into Turkie, and the Shippe cast awaie vppon the maine, and all the men drouned exceptyng the childe, whiche beeyng in a Cradle was carried to the Shore as it laie. Where a Fisherman founde it, with suche sumptuous furnitures aboute it, with a very riche Jewell hangyng about the necke. He tooke it vp in his armes, and carryng it home, with Bathes and homely Dyntmentes of his owne deuising, within a very little space, the childe was restored to perfecte health, whom he called Aramanthus, and brought hym vp as his owne Soonne, the childe knowyng no other in deede, but that the Fisherman had been his father, and as Aramanthus grewe in yeares, so he proued of a very comely personage, but of a most excellent and perfecte witte, although he had no other trainyng vp, but

vsed,

vsed to goe to the Sea with his father a fishyng.

Now it fell out that the Turke was leauyng a mightie Armie, to set vpon the Christians, the cause was this, he had twoo children, a sonne and a daughter, the daughter her name was Florella, whose beautie was very excellent, and mindyng to match his daughter with some noble Prince, he pretended that suche Countries, Cities, Townes, Castelles, Foxtes, or what so euer he could by conquest get from the Christians, to giue them all for his daughters dowrie.

Aramanthus hearyng of this preparation to the Warres, would needes become a Souldiour, where at his father the Fisherman was greatly displeased, and beganne to preache vnto his sonne of the incommodities of warre, and with how many miseries Souldiers are besieged. Aramanthus whose baseneſſe of his byngyng vp, could not conceale the nobilitie of his birth, would in no wise be perswaded but goe he would, and beyng pressed for an ordinarie Souldiour, when he came to the place of seruice shewed hymself so baltaunt, and in very shorte space became to be so expert, that that Captaine vnder whose Ensigne he serued, bare awaie the credite from all the rest: and in the ende was hymself preferred to charge, whiche he gouerned with so great discretion, and still conducted with suche celeritie and sleight, that who but Aramanthus and his companie had the onely name throughout the Turkes cãpe, and where there was any attempt to bee giuen, where valiancie should bee showne, Aramanthus he must giue the charge, and where any policie must be put in practise, Aramanthus he must laie the platte: that to be shorte, he grewe into suche credite with the greate Turke hymself, that Aramanthus onely gaue hym counsaill in all his affaires, and there with all had so good successe, that his practises still preuailed, and came to happie end, that the Turke by his aduise, had doen wonderfull spoyles vpon the Christians, and had taken from them many Cities, Tounes, and Prouinces.

And thus leauyng them in the warres for a season, I will conuaie my tale againe to Isabell Queene and wife to Rodericke, who was now the second time knowne to be with child,

whereat

whereat the Duke of Caria beeyng wonderfullie wrothe, pretendyng to finde a quicke dispatche for all together, he secretlie accused the Queene of Adulterie, to the King his brother, and with suche allegations, and false witnesses as he had prouided, so informed the King that his tale was credited: and the rather for that the king knowing his Queene to be with child did thinke himself too farre spent in yeres, to do suche a deede. And yet the King was replenished with so greate pitee, that he could not indure to heare of her death: He therefore by a messenger, commaunded her presentlie to depart the Court: and in paine of her life, neuer after to come in his presence. These newes did wonderfullie amaze the Queene, who with many piteous intercessions, desired to knowe her accusers, and that she might but speake for her self before his Maiestie, and then as he should finde her, to vse her according to her desertes. But all in vaine, for the Duke had so throughlie incensed the King, that he would neither abide to see, nor heare her. The duke vnderstanding how matters had passed, came to the Queene, and semed muche to lament her case, perswading her to hold her self contented for a little season, not doubtyng but in tyme, that he hymself would so perswade with his brother, that she should bee heard to speake in her owne defence, in the meane season, if it pleased her to vse his house in the Countrie he would prouide for her all maner of necessaries, what soeuer she should wante, and for her better comforte, if she had any assured freend, whose companie she desired, that she might secretelie sende for them, to holde her fellowship, and to passe the tyme: and that he hymself would many tymes visite her, and daiely informe her, how matters did passe in her behalfe, with the King his brother.

The poore Queene, thinkyng all had to proceede of good will whiche this Traitor had proffered, gaue him more then a thousand thankes, reposing her self, and the innocencie of her cause, onely in this Judas, who practized nothyng els but her death, and the death of that she went withall.

The next daie he prouided a couple of Ruffians, suche as he knewe were for his purpose, whiche should haue secretelie

conueighed her to the Dukes houſes (as ſhe had thought) but as the Duke had willed them, as thei rode ouer a Foreſt, whē thei came to the ſide of a woode, thei tooke her from her horſe, ſpoyled her of ſuche thynges as were aboute her, and mynded to haue killed her, and thrownе her in ſome Buſhe: But it fell out that there were certaine baniſhed menne in the Woode, whiche liued in that deſarte in maner of Outlawes, and hearyng the piteous complainte of the Queene, thei came to her reſcue, but the villaines that would haue ſlain her, perceiuing them, fledde, and lefte the Queene, where theſe Outlawes came vnto her: vnto whom from poinct to poinct ſhe declared euery thing, how it was happened vnto her, the Outlawes hauing greate compaſſion, whē thei knewe her to be the Quene for that thei had euer heard her to bee Noblie reported on, brought her with theim to their Caue, where thei miniſtered ſuche releef to her diſtreſſe, as menne might doe that were in their eſtates. The Queene thinkyng that God had preſerued her life, to ſome better purpoſe, contented her ſelf for a ſeaſon, to remaine emongeſt theim: Where ſhe learned to plaie the Cooke, and to dreſſe their meate, ſuche as thei brought in, or could prouide for in the Foreſt. And thus leauyng the Quene with theſe Outlawes, I will retourne againe to ſpeake of Aramanthus, who was now deuiſyng to frame a plotte, how he might betraie the Citee of Toloſia, whereof his Father was Kyng, as you haue heard.

For the Turke hauyng intelligence, of the pleaſauntneſſe of this Citee, and of the wonderfull wealthe and riches, wherwith it did abounde, and therewithall had learned, that it was of ſuche force and inuinſible ſtrengthe, that there was no maner of hope, how it might be ſubdued, whereat the Turke was verie ſorowfull and ſadde.

But my yong Fiſherman Aramanthus, whoſe cunnyng neuer failed, where courage could not help, cauſed the Turke with his whole armie by ſea, to come before this Citee, which is ſituate faſt vpon the ſea ſide, and there to come to an anker, where Aramanthus hymſelf, as a meſſenger appointed from the Turke, came to the kyng of Toloſia, to whom he told this

tale

tale: That the Turke his Maister, hauyng been in diues partes of Christendome, where he had made warres a long space, and vpon diuers considerations, mindyng to departe with his Armie, into his owne Countrey for a season, and beyng vpon the Seas: one night as he was lyyng vpon his bedde, behold, a vision appeared vnto hym in a Dreame, whiche shewed hym how greeuously he had offended the God of the Christians, in the persecutyng, spoilyng, and the murthcryng of them, as he had doen in this iourney, and for that he should know, that the Christian God, was the moste high and Almightie God in deede, whom with his tyrannie he had so displeased, he should bee creepled of all his limmes from that tyme forthe, till his diyng daie, whiche should verie shortly followe, with this he awaked, and giuyng a piteous grone, suche as was about hym commyng vnto hym, found hym in a wonderfull maze, and so benummed in all his partes, that he was not able to stir hande nor foote: The nexte daie callyng his Counsailers and Captaines about hym, not able of hymselfe to come forthe emongst theim, but as he was brought out of his Cabbin on mennes backes, he declared vnto them the whole circumstaunce of the premisses, and beyng striken with a wonderfull remorse in cõscience, he determined to saile backe againe, not mindyng to depart frõ out those partes of Christendome, till he had made satisfaction of all suche spoiles and outrages, as he had committed against the Christians, and hymselfe with his whole armie to become Christened, and there to bee instructed in the true and perfect faith, and as he continued this determinatiõ, behold, a contrary winde hath driuen vs on these parts, where hearyng of the Fame of this Noble Citee of Tolosia, he hath sent me vnto your grace, desiryng nothing but your safe conducte for hymselfe, and certaine of his cheef Lordes and Counsailors that be about hym, that in this noble Citee thei might be Baptized, and receiue the Christian faithe, promising hereafter, not onely to ioyne in league, and perfect amitie with the Christians, but also to lincke with them in Religion, hymselfe, his Countries, Kyngdomes, and Prouinces.

This tale was not so smoothly told, but there was greate

doubte and ſuſpition had in the matter, in the ende thinkyng thei could receiue no preiudice, by receiuing of ſo ſmal a nomber, gaue ſafe condite for the Turke hymſelf, and for fiue hundred of his companie, ſuche as it pleaſed himſelf to appointe.

The next daie, the Turke was brought into the Citee on mennes ſhulders, with his appointed companie, where he was worthely receiued by the king himſelf, with the reſt of his lordes, and brought into a Pallace of purpoſe, very richely furniſhed, where beyng laied doune vpon a bedde, as though he had been able neither to ſtande nor ſit, and giuyng the King, with the reſt of his companie, great thankes for his entertainment he deſired him with the Duke his brother (according to the cuſtome) to be his Godfathers when he ſhould be Chriſtened, to whiche requeſt thei bothe willyngly agreed: the next daie the Turke hymſelf was the firſt that receiued Chriſtendome, and then all the reſt of his noble men that wer with him, the which beyng finiſhed, many godlie exhortations were preached vnto theim by learned menue. The Turke ſeemed in verie gratefull maner to take this curteſie, wherewith the King had vſed him: and thus taking his leaue himſelf with all his companie, departed againe aborde the ſhippes: the Turke himſelf beyng caried vpon mennes backes, making ſhowe as though he had been ſo feeble and weake, that he had not been able to haue moued, or ſtirred any one ioynte without helpe, fainyng that he would haue departed with his companie into Turkie.

The King of Toloſa with all his people and Citezens, ſeyng with what deuotion the Turke with the reſte of his companie, had receiued Chriſtendome, began to thinke aſſuredly, that onely by the Diuine prouidence of God, the Turke was ſo conuerted, and doubted nothyng of the tale, whiche Aramanthus before had told them, whiche tourned in the ende to their vtter ſubuerſion. For the nexte daie Aramanthus commyng againe to the Kyng, brought woorde of the death of the Turke, and with a piteous diſcourſe vttered, with a nomber of fained ſighes, ſaied: that about twelue a clocke of the night paſt, the Turke deceaſed, and deſired at the houre of his death that as in this worthie Citee, he had receiued the true and Catholike

tholike faithe, so likewise that he might bee entoumbed, and receiue Christian buriall in the Cathedrall Churche, to the whiche he had giuen by his will fourtie thousande Frankes, more to the common Treasure of the Citee, an hundred thousande Frankes, to the King himself as a president of his good will, a riche Jewell, whiche hymself did weare of greate estimation, to the Duke his brother, his owne Armour and furniture. Item, to the releef of the poore within the Citee, tenne thousande Frankes. Many other thinges (q Aramanthus) he hath bequeathed, that I haue not spoken of, the whiche God willyng, shalbe performed to the vttermoste.

The king semed greatly to lament the death of the Turke and began to coniecture assuredly, that it was the will of God but to preserue his life, till he had receiued Christendome, but the time of his buriall, was deferred for certain daies, til thinges might be prouided, and more readie for the pompe, and solemnising of his Funerall, and wonderfull cost was bestowed by Aramanthus, who had the onely ordering of the matter, hoping in the ende to receiue the whole commoditie: and also to be rewarded with a large and bountifull interest. The daie of buriall beyng at hande, Aramanthus desired the king, that for so muche as the Turke had finished his daies in the middest of his armie emongst his Souldiers, that he might likewise bee buried like a noble captain, and according to the maner of the feeld: he might be brought to his graue with certaine bandes, trailing their weapons, as the custome of souldiers is to burie their dedde. This request seemed to bee verie conuenient, and therefore was the readilier graunted: but what should I stand with long circumstance, to discipher all the Ceremonies that wer vsed in this treason. The daie was come, that this practise must be put in vre, and an emptie coffin solempnly brought to the citee, vnder shewe of greate sorrowe, when thei were al filled with greate ioye and gladnesse, to se what happie successe was like to followe, of that thei had premeditated, and accordyng as Aramanthus had giuen order, 5000. of their chose men were appointed to marche, the one halfe before, and the other half after the Coffin, trailyng their Ensignes and wea-

pons,and in this maner thei entred the Citee,where the king with his nobles and principalles of the Citee,were readie in mournyng weedes to accompanie the Corse. When Aramanthus sawe his tyme,the Alarum was giuen, and he hymself was the first that laied handes of the king his Father,the rest of his nobles were so enclosed, that there could not one of thē escape: Defence there was none to bee made,for the one side were in Armes, killyng and murtheryng of as many as thei could see stirryng in the streates: The other side vnprouided, glad to hide theim selues,for the sauegard of their liues: The reste of the fleete were likewise in a readinesse,and commyng a lande,entred the Citee, where there was no man to repulse them. And thus the famous Citee of Tolosa was taken by the Turkes,euen in a moment, without any maner of resistance: the churches and prisons were filled full of Christians,where thei were whipped,racked,and tormented to the death,vnlesse thei would forsake their Faithe. The kyng hymself with his brother,and all the Lordes,were commited to prison, there to bee fedde with breade and water(and yet to be scantled with suche short allowaunce, as it was not able to suffice Nature) and so to be dieted,vnlesse thei would forsake their Faithe.

Now the Turke,who onely by the meanes of Aramanthus, had cōquered from the Christians so many citees and tounes, for the loue he bare vnto hym,and in respect of his seruice,determined to make Aramanthus his sonne in lawe,and to giue hym his daughter Florella for his wife: and for her dowrie,all suche partes as he had taken from the Christians by conquest and vnderstandyng that the father of Aramanthus was but a poore Fisherman,he pretended likewise to make hym a duke, and to giue hym liuyng to maintaine his estate. The Turke therfore with allpossible speede, hasted messengers with shippyng,to bryng his daughter,with the old Fisherman,the supposed Father of Aramanthus,to this Citie of Tolosa,where he minded to performe that he had determined.

Now it fell out,that the miserable Queene Isabell (whom you haue heard was lefte with child,remainyng with certaine Outlawes) was deliuered of a Daughter, whiche she her self

nursed

nurſed in the Caue, where ſhe had remained, and hearyng that the Turke had taken the Citee of Toloſia, would needes goe ſee what was become of the kyng her houſebande: her daughter whiche was not yet fullie a yere olde, ſhe committed to the Outlawes, to bee foſtered with ſuche homelie Junkettes, as thei could prouide, wo ſeeyng her determination, promiſed to dye Nurſe the child, ſo well as thei could, till ſhe ſhould make retourne. Thus preparyng her ſelf in a verie ſimple attire, with a bondle of Broomes on her hedde, ſhe came to the Citee of Toloſia, where romyng vp and doune the ſtreates to ſell her Broomes, ſhe learned all that had happened to the Kyng, and how he was ready to periſhe, for want of foode and ſuſtenance wherefore myndyng to giue ſuche ſuccours, as her habilitie would ſerue: She deuiſed in the maner of a poore ſeruaunt, to gette into the ſeruice of the Turke, who was the Jailer, and had the cuſtodie of the Kyng, where euery Night, as opportunitie would ſerue, ſhe conueighed to hym through a grate, ſuche fragmentes as ſhe ſpared out of her owne bealie, whiche were verie ſhorte, and there withall muche more homelie, but ſomthyng the better to amende his cheare. She would leane her ſelf cloaſe to the grate, and thruſtyng in her Teate betweene the Irons, the king learned againe to ſucke, and thus ſhe dieted him a long ſeaſon. Neither wiſte the kyng what ſhe was, that beſtowed on hym ſo greate grace and goodneſſe: yet he bleſſed her more then a thouſande tymes a daie. And although there were many of his companie, that died for wante of ſuſtenaunce, yet he again with theſe banquettes recouered himſelf, and beganne to waxe ſtrong. Whereat the Turke beganne to ſuſpecte ſome parcialitie in the Jailer, and cauſed a priuie watche to bee kept: but Iſabell ſuſpectyng nothyng, according to her accuſtomed maner, at night when it was darke came to her Nurſerie, where her order that ſhe ſo long vſed, was eſpied, and beeyng apprehended by the watche, the nexte daie ſhe was preſented to the Turke, and in what maner thei had founde her, whereat the Turke wonderfullie agreeued: Sware by Mahounde hym ſelf, that ſhe ſhould preſently bee tortured, with the greateſt tormentes that might be deuiſed.

And

And in the middeſt of his furie, woorde was brought hym that his Daughter Florella, with the Fiſherman that was Father to Aramanthus were arriued, and readie to preſent them ſelues before hym, whereat the Turke wonderfullie reioyſed, and callyng Aramanthus, cauſed them to bee brought in, Florella gaue that reuerence to the Turke, whiche bothe appertained to the duetie of a Childe, and alſo as belonged to his eſtate. Aramanthus likewiſe, although he were the greateſte Counſailour, appertinent to the Turke, yet vſed that dutifull reuerence to the Fiſherman his Father, as is to bee required in a Childe. The Turke imbracyng his Daughter Florella, tolde her the cauſe that he had ſent for her, was to eſpouſe her to Aramanthus, who although the Deſtinies had denaied to make Noble by place of birthe, yet through his Uertues, Valiaunce, and worthie exploites, he had gained the title of true Nobilitie, in deſpite of Fortunes teeth. Florella hauing heard of the Fame and worthineſſe of Aramanthus, was the beſte pleaſed woman in the worlde.

And the Turke turnyng hym towardes the Fiſherman, ſaied: And a thouſande times happie art thou old Father, that haſt liued to ſee thy ſelf ſo highly exalted in thy offſpryng: The poore Fiſherman kneelyng doune, ſaied: Moſte mightie, and magnificente Prince, not mindyng longer to conceale the thyng, whiche might redounde ſo greatly to the contentation of ſuche worthie perſonages, ſeeyng then that Aramanthus, who onely through his own valiancie, hath aſpired to ſo great dignitie and honour. How greatly were I then to be blamed, and how worthely might I bee condemned: If I ſhould take vpon me to be the ſire of hym, who by all likelihood, is deſcended of Roiall and Princely race, for better teſtimonie, behold this riche Mantell, and theſe other coſtly furnitures, wherein I founde Aramanthus wrapped, and by ſeemyng ſaued by his Cradell, whiche brought hym a Shoore, from ſome Shippe that was wracked, where I founde hym by the Sea ſide (as I ſaie) wrapped in theſe ſumptuous Furnitures, with this riche and precious Jewell about his necke, beyng but an Infaunte, by coniecture not aboue the age of a quarter of a yere,

where

where takyng hym vp in my armes, I brought hym home to my house, called hym by the name of Aramanthus, and thus fostered hym vp as my owne child, vntil the daie that he came to serue your Maiestie in the Warres.

The Queene Isabell whiche stoode by, and heard this discourse, and seing the furnitures and the Jewelles, wherewith she had decked her childe, assuryng her self that Aramanthus was her sonne, could no longer staie her speeche, but said: And doe I then beholde my sonne with my vnhappie eyes, is he liuyng here in presence, whom I deemed to be dead? Oh moste gracious Gods I yeelde you humble thankes, and would to God my sonne thy commyng had been but halfe so happie, as thy presence is ioyfull to me thy wretched mother. What newes be these (q the Turke) whiche I heard, I thinke the woman be out of her wits: but what art thou that wouldest chalenge Aramanthus for thy sonne, whose parentes now I well perceiue, are no beggers like thy self. Yes surely (quoth the Queene) and muche more miserable, then those that goe from doore to doore: and although his father sometyme swaied the sword of gouernement, and satt in place and seate of Princely Throne. Dispatche then at once (q the Turke) and tell me who is his father, and what is the miserie wherwith he is perplexed: wherein if thou canst perswade me with a truth, assure thee that onely for Aramanthus sake, I am the man that will minister release.

Behold then (q the Queene) Kyng Rodericke is his Father, whom thy self keepest here in prison, in this miserable maner, and I whom thou seest here am his mother, the wife of the Kyng, and sometyme the Queene of this wretched Citie of Tolosa, who beeyng deliuered of a sonne, whiche by the pleasure of GOD was visited in my wombe, and borne in an extreame Leprosie: for helpe whereof he was sent by his Father by Shippyng to the Ile of Candy, and till this present daie there was neuer tidynges heard, either of the Shippe, or of any one man that was in her. And now behold I see with myne eyes the furnitures wherein I wrapped my childe, and the Jewell which I put about his neck, with my owne handes

at his departure: the Fisherman verifyng this tale to be true, saied in deede that he founde hym in an extreame Maladie, which he cured himself with medicines of his own prouiding.

Aramanthus hauyng heard how matters were sorted out, beganne to teare hymself, saiyng: Ah most wicked and vnnaturall wretche, what Furies haue saued thee, that thou wart not drowned with the rest, but that thou must bee preserued as an Instrument to worke thy Parentes wracke: Come come you Hellishe Hagges, and shewe your force on hym that hath worthely deserued it. But what hath Tantalus offended, that he should continually bee sterued? Or how hath Sisiphus that rowles the restlesse Stone? Or what trespasse hath been committed by Prometheus, Ixyon, Titias, or Danaus sillie daughters, drawyng water at the Well: that maie bee compared to that whiche I haue doen, is it possible thē that I should escape vnpunished? Or that the sacred Gods will bee vnreuenged of my fact, no no, I haue deserued to be plagued, and haue merited more worthely to be tormented then any of these afore rehearsed. Florella ouer hearyng these desperate speeches, fell doune in a sowne for greefe to see her Aramanthus so disquieted. The Turke after his daughter was come againe to her self, forrowed to see the beauinesse of Aramanthus, caused the Kyng his father, with the Duke of Caria presently to be sent for out of prison: And takyng Isabell on the one of his hands, and Aramanthus on the other, he saied to the Kyng: Receiue here noble Prince, a moste louyng and faithfull wife, and a moste valiaunt and worthie sonne: And my self from an enemie, for euer after this, to become thy most assured and trustie freende.

The Kyng was wonderfully amazed to heare these speeches, did thinke hymself to be in some dreame: till in the ende he heard the whole discourse how euery thyng had happened, and beyng rauished with gladnesse, he saied.

O happie euill, whiche bryngeth in the ende so greate a good, and welcome bee that sorrowe, whereby is sprong a ioye, muche more surmountyng, then euer was any beauinesse: and with many like speeches, he stil embraced his sonne

Aramanthus

Aramanthus in his armes, and although he vnderstoode that it was the Queene his wife, whiche so louingly had succoured hym, when he was readie to haue famished in the Prison, for want of meate: yet he could not finde in his harte to beare her any countenance, considerynge what he had conceiued against her, by ỹ infoꝛmation of his bꝛother (as befoꝛe you haue heard) whiche being perceiued by the Duke, moste humbly desiring foꝛgiuenesse: he confessed to the Kyng all his mischeefe, from the beginnyng to the endyng, whereof the Kyng was bothe soꝛy and glad: Soꝛy, foꝛ that he had so vnnaturally dealt with so vertuous and courteous a wife: And glad foꝛ that he was so resolued and confirmed in her chastitie, whiche befoꝛe he had in suspence.

And now the Turke, foꝛ the loue that he bare to Aramanthus, and foꝛ the likyng that he sawe to bee in his daughter towardes hym, whom he hymself had appoincted to bee her spouse, became in deede to be Chꝛistened, with all his retinew that was about hym, and then restoꝛyng Rodericke againe to the Kyngdome of Tolosia. By all consentes the Mariage betweene Aramanthus and Florella, was concluded with great pompe and magnificence: and thus the Turke leauyng this new maried couple in the Citie of Tolosia, and departed with his Armie into Turkie.

The Queene Isabell, not foꝛgettyng the greate goodnesse she had receiued by these Outlawes, whiche befoꝛe had saued her life, and with whom her daughter yet remained, so dealt with the Kyng her housebande, that thei were altogether sent foꝛ, and very ioyfully receiuyng his daughter: restoꝛed the Outlawes againe to their libertie: bestowyng of them foꝛ recompence, roomes, and offices of credite and estimation.

Thus to conclude, euery one beyng well contented, thei liued together in quietnesse, with many long and happie daies.

FINIS.

Of Phylotus and Emelia.

The Argument of the viij. Historie.

¶Phylotus *an olde and auncient Citizen of* Rome, *falleth in loue with* Emelia, *a yong and beautifull virgin the daughter of* Alberto, *who knowyng the wonderfull wealth of* Phylotus, *would haue forced his daughter to haue married hym, but in the ende was pretely deceiued by* Phylerno, *the brother of* Emelia, *who maried with* Phylotus *in his Sisters steade, and other pretie actions that fell out by the waie,*

IT hath many tymes bin had in question, and yet could neuer bee decided from whence this passion of extreame loue doeth proceede, whose furie is suche where it once taketh possession, that (as thei saie) loue is without lawe, so it maketh the ¶acients to be as vtterly voyd of reason, but in my opinion the self same thing, whiche is many tymes shadowed vnder the title of loue, maie more properly bee termed and called by the name of lust, but bee it loue, or bee it lust, the difference is nothyng so muche, as the humour that feedes it, is wonderfull straunge, and hath no maner of certaintie in it excepting this, it is without parcialitie, for commonly when it driueth vs to effect, it is doen without any maner of respect, for some tyme it maketh vs to linger after our frendes, somtyme to languish after our foes, yea: betweene whom there hath been had mortall hostilitie: the sonne hath been seen to fall in loue with the wife of his father, the father again in like maner with the wife of his sonne, the Kyng hath bin attached with the poore and needie Begger, the poore againe in likyng with those of high degree, yea, and though there haue beene many whiche haue

seen

seen their owne errour, and there withall haue confessed their abuse, yet thei haue not bin able to refraine them selues, from prosecuting their follie to the ende, and all be it, reason proffereth vs sondrie sufficient causes, why we ought to refraine the appetite of our own desires, yet fancie then is he that striketh suche a stroke, that reasons rules can naught at all preuaile, and like as those whom loue hath once intangled, the more thei striue the farther thei bee tied, so it is vnpossible that loue should be constrained, where affection breedes not liking, nor fancy is not fed, but where these two hath once ioyned in election, all other affects be so dimme and blinded, that euery vice seemeth to vs a vertue, whereof springeth this Prouerbe. In loue there is no lacke, so that in deede to saie the truth, if there be any pietie to be imputed to this raging loue, it is in that it is not parciall, nor hath it any respect of persons, but bee thei frendes, be thei foes, be thei riche, be thei poore, be thei young, be thei olde, bee thei wise, bee thei foolishe, loue is still indifferent, and respecteth all a like: but if any man will thinke that in respect of beautie, wee esteeme not all the rest: I am able to saie it is not true, considering how many haue forsaken the better liking, and haue chosen the worse, so that for my parte the more I consider of it, the more I am amazed, and therefore will beate my braines no more aboute it, but leaue it to the credite of suche as haue bin louers themselues, whose skil in the matter I preferre before mine owne, and will come to my Historie of Phylotus, who beyng an aged man, fell in loue with a yong maiden, farre vnfitting to his yeares, and followeth in this sorte.

In the gallant Citie of Naples, there was remainyng a yong man, called by the name of Alberto. This Alberto beyng maried not fully out a yeare, his wife was deliuered of a sonne, whom he named Phylerno, and vpon diuers considerations, mindyng to chaunge his habitation, he prepared hym selfe to goe dwell at Rome, and firk takyng order for his sonne Phylerno, who for the tenderneſse of his age he left still in Naples at Nurse, hymselfe, his wife, with all the rest of his household came to Rome, where he had not very long remained,

but his wife was likewise deliuered of a daughter, whom he called by the name of Emelia, who as she grewe in yeares, she likewise proued to bee very beautifull and faire, and amongst a greate nomber of others, there was dwellyng in Rome an auncient Citizen, whose name was Phylotus, a man very orderly in yeares, and wonderfully aboundyng in goodes, this Phylotus hauing many tymes taken the viewe of Emelia, beganne to growe very sore in loue with her, or rather I maie saie in his olde yeares beganne to doate after this young maiden, for it can not bee properly called loue in these olde men, whose dotage if it were not more then outragious, either their greate discretion would represse it, either their many yeares would mortifie it. But Phylotus in the ende desired Emelia of her father in the waie of Mariage, Alberto accordyng to the custome of Parentes, that desires to marrie their daughters, more for goods, then for good will betweene the parties, more for lucre then for loue, more for liuing then for learning, more for wealth then for wit, more for honour then for honestie, and so thei maie haue great store of money thei neuer consider farther of the man. Alberto in like maner knowyng the wealth wherewith Phylotus was indued, who had neuer a childe but one onely Daughter, whose name was Brisilla, gaue his full consent, without any farther consideration of the inequalitie of the yeares that was betweene Phylotus and his daughter: he neuer remembred what strifes, what iarres, what debates, what discontentment, what counterfaityng, what dissembling, what louring, what loathyng, what neuer likyng, is euer had where there is suche differences betweene the maried, for perfecte loue can neuer bee without equalitie, and better were a maried couple to continue without liuing, then without loue: And what are the occasions that make so many women to straie from their housbandes, but when thei be maried to such as thei cannot like of: but surely if women did throughly consider how daungerous it is for them to deale with these olde youthes, I thinke thei would bee better aduised in medlyng with them: for besides that thei be unwildie, lothsome, (and sir reuerence of you) very vnlouely for you to lye by, so thei bee

commonly

commonly inspired with the spirite of Jelousie, and then thy will looke to you so narrowly, and mewe you vp so closely, that you will wishe a thousande tymes the Priest had bin hanged that maried you, but then to late.

But to retourne to our Historie: Alberto respectyng more the wealth of Phylotus, then the likyng of his daughter, gaue his consent to take hym for his sonne in lawe, and told Emelia how he had disposed on her: Emelia seyng what an olde babie her father had chosen to be her housebande, moste humbly desired hym to giue her leaue to choose for her self, whereat her father being very angrie, beganne sharply to rate her, saiyng: And arte thou then so muche wedded to thine owne will, that thou scornest to be derected by me thy louyng father, or thinkest thou that thy wisedome doeth so farre surmount my wit, that thou canst better prouide for thy self, then I whiche so carefully haue hetherto brought thee vp, or doeth the tender loue or the chargeable cost whiche I haue bestowed on thee, deserue no better recompence, then to despise those that I would haue thee to like of.

Emelia fallyng doune of her knees before her father saied: Moste deare and louyng father, moste humbly I beseech you, for the affection whiche by nature you beare me, not to think me so graceless a childe, that I would goe about to contrarie you, or stubbornly would refuse what soeuer you would think conuenient for my behooke, and although you shall finde in me suche duetie as is meete for a daughter, and al obedience that is fit for a childe, yet sir consider the harte whiche can not bee compelled, neither by feare, neither by force, nor is not otherwise to be lured, then onely by fancies free consent, and as you haue bestowed on me this fraile and transitorie life, so my bodie shall be at your disposition as it shal please you to appoint it, and will conclude with this humble petition, desiryng you not to bestowe me of any that is not agreeable to my fancie and good likyng.

Well (quoth her father) then see you frame your liking to like well of my likyng. I haue promised you to Phylotus in mariage, and Phylotus is he that shall be your housband, and

looke

looke you goe not aboute to contende against that I haue determined, if you doe, neuer accompt me for father nor freend. and thus he departed.

Emelia hearyng this cruell conclusion of her father, was wonderfully abashed, and beeyng by her self in her Chamber, she beganne to consider of her fathers woordes, and for feare to incurre any farther displeasure, she deuised how she might frame her self to the likyng of her louer, and with a yong womans minde, she first beganne to consider of his wealth, of his callyng, of the reuerence wherewith he was vsed in the Citie, and that likewise in beyng his wife, she should also bee had in estimation, and bee preferred before other women of meaner credite, and to desire superioritie, it is commonly euery womans sickenesse, and therefore this could not choose but please her very well: then she remembred how commodious it were to marrie one so wealthie as Phylotus, whereby she should not neede to beate her braines aboute the practising of housewiferie, but should haue seruauntes at commaundment to supplie that tourne, this likewise pleased her very well, but because she would well perswade her self, she beganne to coniecture how she should spende the tyme to her contentment, and therefore she beganne to thinke what a pleasure it was to bee well furnished with sondrie sutes of apparell, that in the mornyng when she should rise, she might call for what she list to put on, accordyng as the tyme and the fashion did require, and her fancie serued best, for thus Phylotus was well able to keepe his wife, and this pleased her likewise very well, & then when she were vp, she might breake her fast with a cuppe of Malmsie, or Muskadine next her harte. It was very good for ill Ayres in a mornyng, and this she thought was but an easie matter, and likewise pleased her very well: when she had broken her fast, then she might stirre about the house, and looke to this, and see to that, and where she found any thyng amis, not to touche it with her owne fingers, for marryng the beautie of her hande, but to call for Cicelie, Ione, or Cate, and to chide them like Sluttes, that thei could not spie a fault but when thei must be tolde: this likewise pleased her very well, then to

haue

haue prouided for Dinner some iuncketts, that serued best her appetite, her housebãde had good store of coine, and how could it bee better spente, then vpon themselues: to make their fare the better, this likewise pleased her verie well, now when she had dined, then she might goe seeke out her examplers, and to peruse whiche wooꝛke would doe beste in a Ruffe, whiche in a Gorget, whiche in a Sleeue, whiche in a Quaike, whiche in a Caule, whiche in a Handkercheef, what Lace would doe beste to edge it, what seame, what stitche, what cut, what gard, and to sit her doune, and take it forthe by little and little: and thus with her Nedle to passe the after noone, with deuising of thinges for her owne wearyng, this likewise pleased her passyng well: Then to prouide for Supper some shift of diet, and sondrie sauces, the better to help the stomacke, Oranges, Lembs, Oliues, Caphers, Salades of sondrie sortes, alas a Croune will goe a greate waie in suche trifles. This likewise pleased her verie well, whē she had supped, to vse some exercise, accordyng to the season: if it were in Sommer, to goe walke with her neighbours to take the aire, or in her Gardein to take the verdure of sweete and pleasaunt flower, this likewise pleased her verie well, when she was come in, and readie to goe to her Chamber, a Cup of cold Sacke to bedward, is verie good for digestion, and no coste to speake of, where suche abondaunce doeth remaine, and this likewise pleased her verie well.

But now although she had deuised, to passe the daie tyme with suche contentation, when she remembred at Night, she must goe to bed to bee lubber leapt: and with what cold courtesie she should be entertained by her graie hedded bedfelowe, what frosen embracementes he was able to bestowe of her, all was marde, and quite dashte out of remembraunce, and all the commodities before spoken of, that she should receiue in the tyme of the daie, would not serue to counteruaile that one incommoditie, in the season of the Night: Like as wee saie, one vice spilles a greate nomber of vertues. Thus Emelia was now to seeke, and could in nowise frame her self to loue Philotus: but when she had flattered her self with a thousande delightes, that she should receiue in the daie time by his weal-

when she remembred bedde tyme, she was as newe to beginne as before. Wherefore she remained in great perplexitie, thinkyng her happe to bee ouer hard, and the comforte verie bare, where the beste choice had suche assuraunce of doubtfull ende. For to Marrie after her Fathers mynde, she knewe would breede her lothed life: and to gainsaie what he had determined, would likewise loose her fathers likyng, that she wiste not for her life whereon to resolue, and thus from daie to daie, as she continued in this doubt. There happened to hit into her companie a yong Romaine gentleman, whose name was Flanius, who sodainly fell in Loue with Emelia, and takyng the tyme whilest his opportunitie serued: he let Emelia to vnderstande, of the greate loue he bare her. Emelia, accordyng to the custome of women, made the matter verie coie at the firste, although in her harte she wer right glad, cõsideryng her case how it stood. Flanius was so muche the more importunate vppon her, and with suche nice termes as woers be accustomed: He so Courted, and followed Emelia, that she perceiuyng his feruente affection, tolde hym a verie short circumstaunce, how her father had disposed her, to one that she could not like of, and therfore, if he would firste promise to take her as his wife, and that he could finde suche meanes, to conueigh her from her Fathers house in secrete sorte (for otherwise she was sure her Father would bee a let to hinder their purpose) she was contented to harken to his speeche, and yeeld to his demaunde. Flanius the gladdest man in the world, to heare these ioyfull newes, sware vnto her, that all should bee accomplished, and that with as muche speede as her self would desire.

There was no more to conclude of thẽ, but how she might be conueighed from out her fathers house. Flanius deuised that late in an Euenyng, or in the Night tyme when euery one were quiete in their beddes, if she could finde the meanes to gette forthe of doores, then he would be readie to receiue her. But that could not be, for bothe her Fathe and Mather neuer failed, to bee at home in the Euenynges, and at Nightes she was lodged in her Fathers Chambers, that it was impossible for her to gett forthe. So that there was no remedie, but that

the

the feate must bee wrought in some after Noone, when both her Father and Mother vsed to bee abroade, about their businesse: And then she knewe not how to come forthe alone, because she had not been accustomed so to dooe, and to followe a straunger, it would breede the greater suspition.

But Flanius to auoide all these surmises, deuised the nexte euenyng, to conueigh her in at some backe windowe of her fathers house, a sute of mannes apparell: wherin the next daie in the after noone, her father & mother beyng abroad, she should shift her self, and so come her waies vnknowne of any, to suche a place: where he himself would be ready awaiting for her, and so conueigh her home to his owne house. This deuise Emelia liked passyng will, and accordyng as it was appointed. The next euening Flanius cõueighed this sute of apparell in at the windowe, where Emelia was ready to receiue it, and layng it vp in safetie, til the next daie in the after noone, her father and her mother beyng bothe forthe of doores, she quickly shifted her self, into this manes apparell, and thus forth of doores she goes to her appointed place, wher Flanius was staiyng, who accordyng to promise, conueighed her home to his owne house.

This matter was not so closely handeled by Emelia, but she was espied by one of her Fathers seruauntes, who beeyng on the backside through a Windowe, sawe her how she was stripping of her self, and marked how she put on the mannes apparell, whereat the yong fellowe had greate meruaile, and stoode still beholdyng to see what would fall out in the ende. But whẽ he sawe her goe forthe a doores, he hastened after into the streate: But Emelia was so sodainly gone, that for his life hr wist not whiche waies to seeke after her, wherfore in a wõderfull haste, he came to his Maister, whom he founde in the Citee, in the companie of Philotus, saiyng: Oh sir, I haue verie euill newes to tell you, what is the matter (q his maister) is any thyng a misse at home? Yea sir (q the seruaunte) your daughter Emelia is euen now departed into the Citee, in the habite of a man: But whiche waies she wente, I could not for my life deuise, for after she gat once forthe of the place where she shifter her, I could neuer more set eye of her.

Is Emelia gone (quoth her louer Philotus) Oh God, what ruill newes bee these that I heare: And without any further staie, bothe the Father and the Louer, gat them out at the doores together, and aboute the streates thei runne like a couple of madde men.

Now it fell out, that Philerno the Sonne of Alberto, and Brother to Emella, whom you haue heard before, was lefte at Naples, beeyng an Infante, and had remained there till this tyme at Schoole, and at this verie instaunte was come from Naples to Rome, to visite his Father and Mother, of whom he had no maner of knowledge, otherwise then by their names. And it fortuned that Alberto and Philotus, happened to meete with Philerno in the streates, who was so like his sister Emelia, that bothe Alberto and Philotus, assured themselues, that it could bee no other but she. Wherefore Alberto commyng to hym, saied: staie, staie, moste shameleſſe and vngracious Girle, doest thou thinke that by thy disguising of thy self, in this maner, thou canst escape vnknowne to me, who am thy Father, Ah vile strumpet that thou art: what punishement is sufficient for the filthinesse of thy facte: And with this he seemed, as though he would haue flone vpon her in the streate, to haue beate her: but Philotus thruste in betweene them, and desired his neighbour to staie hymself, and then imbracyng Philerno in his armes, he saied: Ah Emelia my sweete and louing wenche, how canste thou so vnkindelie forsake thy Philotus, whose tender loue towardes thee is suche, that as I will not let to make thee soueraigne of my self, so thou shalt be Dame and Mistresse of all that euer I haue, assuryng thee, that thou shalt neuer want for Golde, Gemmes, Jewelles, suche as bee fit and conuenient for thy degree.

Philerno seeyng a couple of old dotyng foole, thus clusteryng aboute hym, not knowyng what thei were: had thought at the first, thei had been out of their wittes, but in the ende by their woordes, perceiuyng a farther circumstance in the matter, he deuised some thyng for his owne disporte, to feede them a little with their owne follie, saied: Pardon me I beseeche you this my greeuous offence, wherein I knowe I haue too farre

farre straied, from the limites and boundes of modestie, pro-
stryng hereafter so to gouerne my self, that there shall be
sufficient cause, whereby to accuse me of suche vnmaidē-
partes, and will euer remaine with suche duetie and obediēce,
as I trust shall not deserue but to be liked duryng life.

Philotus hauyng heard this pitifull reconciliation, made by his Emelia, verie gently entreated her father, in her behalf, well (q̄ her father) seeyng you will needes haue me to forgiue this her leudnesse, at your requeste I am contented to pardon her, and then speakyng to Philerno, he saied.

How saie you housewife, is your stomacke yet come doune, are you contented to take Philotus for your Housebande, yea my good Father (q̄ Philerno) and that with all my harte, Oh happie newes (q̄) Philotus) and here withall he began to sette his cappe on the one side, and to turne vp his muschatoes, and fell to wippyng of his mouthe, as though he would haue falne a kissyng of her by and by in the streates, but remēbryng hym self where he was, he brought Alberto with Philerno, into a freendes house, that was of his familiare acquaintaunce, and there the Marriage betweene theim, was throughlie concluced, and all parties seemyng to giue their full consentes. Philotus desired his father in Lawe, that he might haue the custodie of Emelia, swearing by his old honestie, that he would not otherwise vse her, then his owne Daughter Brisilla, vntill the daie of his Nuptials, and then to vse her as his wife: to which requeste Alberto seemed verie willynglie to giue consent: but then because Philotus would not carrie his beloued, through the streates in her mannes apparell, he desired his Father in Lawe to goe home, and sende some sute of her apparell, wherwith to shift her, before he would carrie her to his owne house. Alberto seyng matters so throughly concluded, toke his leaue of theim bothe, and goyng his waies home, he caused all his Daughters apparell to be looked together, and to bee sent to the place where Philotus was remaining with Philerno, who taking for the suche as should serue the tourne for that present. Philerno so well as he could arraied hymself, in one of his sisters sutes of apparell, and thus departed with Philotus to his

me houſe, where Philotus callyng his daughter Briſilla, he cal-ynto her, beholde here the partie, whom I haue choſen to be your Mother, chargyng you of my bleſſyng, that you honour, reuerence, and obeie her, and with all diligence that you be attendaunt vpon her, and readie at an ynche to prouide her of any thing, that ſhe ſhall either want or call for. And you my deare and louyng Emelia, I doe here ordaine and appoincte you to bee Miſtreſſe of this houſe, and of all that is in it, deſiryng you to accepte of this my Daughter, to doe you ſeruice in the daie time, and in the night to vouchſafe her for your bedfellowe, vntill our daie of Marriage bee prefixed, and then my ſelf will ſupplie the rome. Philerno ſeyng the excellent beautie of Briſilla, was nothyng ſorie to haue ſuche a bedfellowe, but thought euery howre a daie, till night was come, whiche beyng approched, to bedde thei went, where Philerno did not thinke it his readieſt waie, to giue any ſodaine attempte, but therefore he brake into this diſcourſe followyng.

My Briſilla, were it not but that wee bee founde parciall in the cauſes of our frendes, but eſpecially where the cauſes doe touche our parentes, our iudgementes be ſo blinded by affection, that we can neither ſee, nor well confeſſe a manifeſt truth: but if matters might be conſidered on, without reſpect of perſones with indifference, and accordyng to the truthe and equitie of the cauſe: I durſt then put my ſelf in your arbitremente my Briſilla, and to abide your ſentence, whereto I doubte not, but you would confeſſe the preiudice I ſuſtaine, it is muche intollerable, and almoſte impoſſible, for a yong maide to endure and the rather, if you would meaſure my condition, by your owne eſtate, who beeyng as you ſee, a yong maiden like your ſelf, and ſhould be thus conſtrained by my freendes, to the mariyng of your father, whom I doe confeſſe to bee worthie of a better wife then my ſelf. But conſideryng the inequalitie of our yeres, I can'not for my life, frame my ſelf to loue him, and yet I am forced againſt my will to Marrie hym, and am appointed to be your mother: that am more meete to be your cõpanion and plaie fellowe. But that affiaunce whiche I haue conceiued in your good Nature, hath made me thus boldly to

ſpeake

speake vnto you, desiryng but to heare your [illegible]
differencie, whether you thinke I haue good cause to cõpla[illegible]
or naie: and then peraduenture I will saie farther vnto you,
in a matter that doeth concerne your owne behoofe.

Brisilla hearyng this pitifull complaint, verie sorrowfull in her behalfe, saied: would to God I were as well able to minister releef vnto your distresse, accordyng to your owne contentment, as I am hartely sorie to consider your greef, and do well perceiue the iuste occasion you haue to complaine.

Ah my Brisilla, saied Philerno, I am as hartely sorie in your behalf, and peraduenture doe vnderstande somethyng, whiche your self dooe not yet knowe of, whiche will greeue you verie sore. But first Brisilla, let me aske you this question, dooe you knowe my father, or naie.

No sure (quoth Brisilla) I haue no maner of knowledge of hym, neither did I knowe, whether you had any father a liue, or naie, but now by your owne reporte, and as straunge it was to me, to heare the wordes, whiche my Father vsed to me this daie, when he brought you home, for that I neuer vnderstoode before, that he went about a wife.

Philerno was verie glad to heare these newes, because it serued so muche the better for his purpose: and therefore saied as followeth.

This tale that I minde to tell you (my Brisilla) will seeme more straunge then all the reste, and yet assure your self, it is nothyng so straunge as true, and therefore giue eare to that I mynde to saie: Doe you not thinke it verie straunge in deede, that the one of vs should bee made bothe mother and daughter to the other, and that our fathers, whiche be now so diescrepit and olde, should bee so ouer haled, with the furie of their fonde and vnbrideled affections, that to serue their owne appetites, thei force not with what clogges of care, thei comber vs that be their louyng daughters, but haue concluded betwene them selues a crosse Marriage, and so in deede it maie well be tearmed, that will fall out so ouerthwarte to our behoofes, who beyng now in our yong and tender yeres, and should bothe of vs bee made the dearlynges of twoo old men, that seekes to pre-

ferre

[illegible] lust, before their childrens loue, and measure [illegible]ir fierie flames of youth, by the ded coles of age, as though thei were able with their cold and rare imbracementes, to delaie the forces of the fleshe, whose flames doeth excede in these our grene and tender yeres, and as muche possible for vs to cõtinue in likyng, as flowers are seen to agree with Froste, but in plaine tearmes (my Brisilla) and to discipher a verie trothe, it is contracted betweene our aged parentes, that your father (as you see) should first take me to his wife, whiche weddyng beyng once performed, then my Father in like maner, should chalenge you, accordyng as it is concluded betweene them.

Alas (ꝙ Brisilla) these newes bee straunge in deede, and it should seem by your woordes so fullie resolued on, that there is no hope of redresse to be had in the matter.

None in the worlde (ꝙ Philerno) but thus betweene our selues, the one of vs to comfort the other.

A colde comforte (ꝙ Brisilla) wee shall finde in that, but oh pitilesse parentes, that will preferre your own pleasures with your childrens paine: your owne likyng, with your childrens loathyng: your owne gaine, with your childrens greefe: your owne sporte, with your childrens spoile: your owne delight, with your childrens despight. O how muche more happie had it been, that we had neuer been borne.

Alas my Brisilla (ꝙ Philerno) tormente not your self with suche extreame anguishe, for if that would haue serued for redresse, the matter had been remedied, and that long sithence: But I would to God my Brisilla, that I were a man for your only sake, and hauing so good leisure, as thus beyng together by our selues, we should so handle the matter, that our fathers should seeke newe wiues.

Alas (ꝙ Brisilla) suche wishes are but waste, and vnpossible it is, that any suche thing should happen.

Impossible (quoth Philerno) naie surely Brisilla, there is nothing impossible, but I haue knowne as greate matters as these haue been wrought: Doe we not read that the Goddesse Venus, transformed an Iuorie Image, to a liuely and perfect woman, at the onelie request of Pygmalion. Diana likewise

conuerted

conuerted Acteon to a Harte. Narcissus for his pride was chan-
ned to a flower. Archane to a Spider, with a greate number
of others haue bin transformed, some into Beastes, some into
Foules, and some into Fishes, but amongst the rest of the mi-
racles that haue bin wrought by the Goddesse, this storie fal-
leth out moste meete and fitting to our purpose.

There was sometime remainyng in the Countrey of Phe-
stos a maried couple, the houshande called by the name of Li-
cius, the wife Telethusa, who beyng with childe, was willed
by her houshande so sone as she should be deliuered, if it were
not a lad, that the childe should presently be slaine, his wife be-
yng deliuered at her appointed tyme, brought forthe a girle,
and yet notwithstandyng her houshandes commaundement,
brought vp the childe, makyng her houshande beleeue it was
a boye, and called it by the name of Iphis, and thus as it grew
in yeares, was apparelled like a lad, and beeyng after by his
father assured to a wife called by the name of Ianthe, a young
Maiden, and the daughter of one Telest dwellyng in Dictis,
Telethusa the mother of Iphis, fearyng her deceipt would bee
knowne, deferred of the Marriage daie so long as she could,
sometymes fainyng tokens of ill successe, sometimes faining
sickneese, sometymes one thyng, sometymes an other, but
when all her shiftes were driuen to an ende, and the Mariage
daie at hande, Telethusa comming to the Temple of the God-
desse Isis, with her heire scattered aboute her eares, where be-
fore the Aulter of Isis, she made her humble supplications, and
the gentle Goddesse hauing compassion, transformed Iphis to
a man.

Loe here Brisilla, as greate a matter brought to passe as a-
ny wee haue spoken of yet, and the Goddesse bee of as greate
force and might in these daies, as euer thei were in times past,
we want but the same zeale and faith to demaunde it, and sure
in my opinion, if either of vs made our request to the Godde-
s, who commonly bee still assistant to helpe distressed wightes,
thei would neuer refuse to graunt our reasonable requestes,
and I will aduenture on it my self, and that without any far-
ther circumstaunce.

...ere with all he seemed with many piteous sighes, throwyng vp his handes to the heauens, to mumble forth many woordes in secrete, as though he had beene in some greate contemplation, and sodainly without any maner of stirryng either of hande or foote, did lye still as it had been a thyng immouable, whereat Brisilla beganne for to muse, and in the end spake to hym, but Phylerno made no maner of aunswere, but seemed as though he had bin in some traunce, wherewith Brisilla began to call and with her arme to shake hym, and Phylerno giuyng a piteous sigh, as though he had bin awaked sodainly out of some dreame, saied. O blessed Goddesse Venus, I yeeld thee humble thankes, that hast not despised to graunt my request: and then speakyng to Brisilla, he saied: and now my Brisilla be of good comforte, for the same Goddesse whiche haue not disdained to heare my supplication, will likewise be assistaunt to further our farther pretences, as hereafter at our better leisure we shall consider of, in the meane tyme receiue thy louyng freende, that to daie was appointed to bee thy fathers wife, but now consecrated by the Goddesse to be thy louyng housbande, and here withall imbracyng Brisilla in his armes. She perceiued in deede, that Emelia was perfectly metamorphosed, which contented her very well, thinkyng her self a thrise happie woman to light of suche a bedfellowe: thus bothe of them the one pleased very well with the other, thei passed the tyme, till Phylotus had prepared and made all thinges readie for his Mariage daie, and then callyng his frendes and neighbours about him, to the Churche thei goe together, where Alberto gaue Phylerno his sonne, in the steede of his daughter Emelia to Phylotus for his wife: when all the rest of the Marriage rites that are to bee doen in the Churche were performed, thei passed forthe the daie with feastyng and great mirthe vntill it was night. When the companie beganne to breake vp, and euery one to take his leaue, and Phylotus with his bride were brought into their Chamber, where Phylerno desiryng the companie to auoyde, and makyng fast the doore he saied to Phylotus, there resteth yet a matter to bee decided betweene you and me, and seyng we bee here together by our

selues,

selues, and that tyme and place doeth fall out to[illegible]
for the best that it be presently determined.

What is the matter then (q Phylotus) speake boldly Emelia, and if there be any thyng that hanges in dispence betweene vs, I trust it shall easely bee brought to a good agreement.

I praie God it maie (q Phylerno) and to reueale the matter in breefe and shorte circumstaunce, it is this. You are now my housebande, and I your lawfull wife, and for that I dooe knowe the difference in our yeares, your self beyng so old and I very yong, it must needes fall out there wil be as greate deuersitie in our conditions: for age is commonly giuen to bee frowarde, testie, and ouerthwart: youth againe to be frolique, pleasaunt, and merrie, and so likewise in all our other conditions wee shall bee founde so contrary and disagreyng, that it will be impossible for vs to like the one of the others doinges, for when I shall seeme to followe my owne humour, then it will fall out to your discontentment. And you againe to followe that diet whiche your age doeth constraine, will be most lothsome vnto me, then you beyng my housbande will thinke to commaunde me, and I must be obedient to your will, but I beyng your wife will thinke scorne to be controlde, and wil dispose of my self according to my owne liking, and then what braules and brabbles will fall out, it were to muche to be rehearsed, and thus we shall liue neither of vs bothe in quiet, nor neither of vs bothe contented, and therefore for the auoidyng of these inconueniences, I haue deuised this waie, that beyng thus together by our selues, we will trie by the eares whiche of vs shall bee maister and haue authoritie to commaunde: if the victory happen on your side, I am contented for euer after to frame my self to your ordinaunce and will as it shall please you to appoinct: if otherwise the conquest happen on my side, I will triumph like a Victor, and will looke to beare suche a swaie, that I will not be contraried in any thing, what so euer it shall please me to commaunde.

Phylotus knowyng not what to make of these speeches, and thinkyng the tyme very long, till he had taken his first

Come, come my Emelia let vs goe to bed, where
not but we shall so well agree, that these matters wil
by bee taken vp, without any controuersie, suche as you
haue spoken of.

Neuer while I liue (q Phylerno) before I knowe where-
on to resolue: and whether you shall rest at my commaunde-
ment, or I at yours.

Why (q Phylotus) doe you speake in earnest, or would you
looke to commaunde me that am your housbande, to whom
you ought to vse all duetie and obedience.

Then were I in good case (q Phylerno) that should be tied
to vse duetie or obedience, to a man of your yeares, that would
not let to prescribe vs rules of your owne dotage, to be obser-
ued in steede of domesticall discipline.

Then I perceiue (q Phylotus) wee shall haue somethyng
adoe with you hereafter, that will vse me with these tearmes
the very first night. But see you make no more to doe, but
come on your waies to bed.

And I perceiue (quoth Phylerno) the longer that I beare
with you, the more foole I shall finde you, and with this vp
with his fiste and gaue Phylotus a sure wheritte on the eare.
Phylotus in a great rage flies againe to Phylerno: there was
betweene them soule for soule, and bore for bore, that it was
harde to Judge who should haue the victorie. In the ende
Phylerno gettes Phylotus faste by the graie beарde, and by
plaine force pulles him doune on the flower, and so be pomels
him aboute the face, that he was like to haue been strangled
with his owne bloud, which gushed out of his nose and mouth.
Wherefore holdyng vp his handes he cried, Oh Emelia, I
yeeld my self vanquished and ouercome, for Gods sake holde
thy handes, and I will neuer more contende with thee during
life.

Phylerno staiyng hymself, saied: Art thou contented then
to yeeld me the conquest, and hereafter this according as thou
hast saied: neuermore to striue with me, neuer to gainsaie any
thyng, what soeuer it shall please me to commaunde.

Neuer while I liue (q Phylotus) and therefore for Gods
sake

sake let me arise, and chalenge to your self wha[illegible]
you please, whiche for me shall neuer be denaied so [illegible]
shall liue.

Well (q Phylerno) but before I will let you arise, I [illegible]
haue you promise me to confirme these conditions, whiche to-
lowe in this maner. First, that at my pleasure I maie goe a-
broade with my freendes, to make merrie so often as I list,
whither I list, and with whom I list. And neither at my go-
yng forthe, to be demaunded whither I will, ne at my returne
to bee asked where I haue been. I will farther haue you con-
descende to this, that for as muche as I haue learned, that it
is not onely very vntothsome, but likewise very vnwhole-
some, for youth and age, to lye sokyng together in one bedde.
I will therefore make no bedfellowe of you, but at my owne
pleasure. And in maner as followeth, that is to saie: this first
yere I shall be contented, to bestowe one night in a moneth to
doe you pleasure, if I maie see you worthie of it, or that you
bee able to deserue it: but the first yere beyng once expired, fo-
wer tymes a yeere maie very well suffice, that is one night a
quarter, as it shall please my self to appoinct. There be many
other matters whiche I will not now stande to repeate, but
these before rehearsed, bee the principall thynges wherein I
wil not be controlde, but meane to follow myne owne liking:
How saie you Phylotus, can you bee contented to frame your
self herein, to followe my direction.

Alas (quoth Phylotus) I see no other shift, I must perforce
endeuour my self paciently to abide what soeuer it shall please
you to commaunde, and doe yeeld my self as recreant, and o-
uercome, and wholy doe put my self to your fauour and mer-
cie, readie to receiue what soeuer it shall please you to awarde
vnto me.

Phylerno, lettyng hym now arise saied: prepare your self
then to goe to your bedde, and anon at myne owne leasure, I
will come vnto you: and departe againe at myne owne plea-
sure, when I shall see tyme.

Phylotus, comforting hymself with these sweete speeches,
did thinke it yet, to be some parte of amendes, that she had pro-

[illegible] and visite hym: went quietly to his bedde, there [illegible] the good hower till Emelia did come.

[illegible] Phylerno, hauyng prepared one of these Marcenarie wo[illegible] (whereof there are greate store in Rome to bee had) conueighed her to the bedd of Phylotus, giuyng her enstructions how to vse her self: and went hymself to his best beloued Brisilla, whom he had made priuie to his whole deuise, and in this maner it was agreed betweene them, thei had thought to haue dieted Phylotus once a moneth with some cast stuffe, suche as thei could hire best cheape in the Toune.

But it fell out that Flanius, whom you haue heard before, had stolne awaie Emelia, beyng at the Churche the same daie that Phylotus was maried, and sawe Alberto giue his daughter Emelia to Phylotus for his wife: had thought assuredly that hymself had been deceiued by some Deuill or spirite, that had taken vpon hym the likenesse of Emelia. And therefore hastyng hymself home with all possible speede, came to Emelia, and blessing himself he saied: I charge thee in the name of the liuyng GOD, that thou tell me what thou art, and that thou presently departe to the place from whence thou camest. And I coniure thee in the name of the holie Trinitie, by our blessed Ladie the Virgine Marie, by Aungels and Archaungels, Patriarkes and Prophetes, by the Apostles, and fower Euangelistes, Matthewe, Marke, Luke and Jhon, by al the holie Martyres and Confessours, and the rest of the rable and blessed route of Heauen, that thou quietly departe without any maner of preiudice, either to man, woman, or childe, either to any maner of Beast that is vppon the face of the earth, the Foules of the ayre, or the Fishes of the Sea, and without any maner of Tempest, Storme, Whirle winde, Thunder or Lightnyng, and that thou take no maner of shape, that maie seeme either terrible or fearfull vnto me.

Emelia hearyng these wordes, merueilyng muche what thei ment: with a smilyng countenaunce came towardes Flanius, saiyng: Why how now Seignior Flanius, what doe you thinke me to be some Deuill, or any Hagge of Hell, that you fall so to Coniuryng, and blessyng of your self.

I charge thee come no nere (quoth Flanius) stra[illegible] these inticementes can no longer abuse me, when I [illegible] with myne eyes, my beloued Emelia, maried in the C[illegible] and giuen by Alberto her Father, to Phylotus for his [illegible] what should I thinke of thee but to be some Feend, or sent vnto me by some Inchauntment or Witchcraft, and therefore I will no longer neither of thy companie, neither of thy conference: And here withall takyng Emelia by the shoulders, he thrust her forthe of doores, and shuttyng the dooze after her: He gat hym to his Chamber, where he fell to his praiers, thinkyng assuredly that Emelia had been some spirite.

But Emelia, after she had a three or fower daies made what meanes she could to Flanius, and sawe it was in vaine: was driuen to goe to her Father, before whom fallyng vppon her knees, she desired hym moste humbly to forgiuer her.

Alberto takyng her vp in his armes saied: that he knewe nothyng wherein she had offended hym, but her suite might easily be graunted.

Deare father (quoth Emelia) I know I haue offended, and so farr as my fact deserueth, rather to be punished then pitied: the remẽbraunce whereof is so lothsome vnto me, that I feare to call you by the name of father, hauing shewed my self so vnworthie a daughter. These wordes she pronounced with such sorrowe, that the teares streamed doune her cheekes, wherewith Alberto moued with naturall affection, said: deare child, I knowe no suche offence that ought to bee so greeuously taken: but speake boldly what so euer it be, I freely forgiue it.

Emelia very well comforted with these speeches, beganne to discourse how she first disguised her self in Pages apparell, and what greef it was to her conscience, that she should so farr straie from the duetie and obedience of a child, and to become a fugitiue in a mans apparell. But her father not sufferyng her further to proceede in her tale, saied: Alas deare daughter if this bee the matter, it is long agoe sithe I haue bothe forgiuen and forgotten these causes: and therefore let these thynges neuer trouble you. But tell me now how doe you like of your bedfellowe, how agree you with hym, or he with you, I

would

glad to knowe.

I feare father (quoth Emelia) that is the matter that I came to you, he hath turned me awaie, and wil no longer take me for his wife, and what is the cause that hath moued hym vnto it, I protest before God I knowe not for my life.

Hath he turned thee awaie (qᵖ Alberto) my self wil quickly finde a remedie for that matter, and without any more to do (would not tary so much as while his goune was a brushing) but out of doores he goes towards Phylotus, whō by chaunce he met withall in the Streates, and in a greate chafe begins to chalenge hym for abusyng of his daughter, swearyng that he would make all Rome to speake of his abuse, if he ment to proceede in that he had begunne.

Phylotus wonderyng to see the man in suche an agonie, beganne to wishe that he had neuer seene hym nor his daughter neither, and that if any bodie haue cause to complaine it is I (quoth Phylotus) that haue maried such a wife, that is more like to a Deuill then a woman: and I perceiue now is maintained in her mischiefe by you that are her father, who ought rather to rebuke her then so to take her part, and to incourage her in her lewdenesse.

What incouragment is this you speake of (qᵖ Alberto) I knowe not what you meane by these wordes, but assure your self of this, that as I wil not maintaine my child in any thing that is euill, so I will not see her take a manifest wrong.

Doe you thinke this to be good then (quoth Phylotus) that your daughter should bestowe suche hansell on her husband as she hath alreadie bestowed vpon me, and then pointyng to his face, he saied: See here your daughters handie worke, how thinke you, is this requisite to be borne with all, that you stande so muche in your daughters defence?

Alberto seeyng his face all swolne, and the skinne scratched of, perceiued that Phylotus was at a fraie, and had good cause to complaine: And wonderyng that his daughter was so sodainly become a shrewe, saied: If this bee my daughters handie worke, I can neither beare withall, neither will I allowe it in her, so to vse her housebande. And therefore I praie you,

you, lette me heare the matter debated betwee[illegible]
doubte not, but to take suche order, as there shall [illegible]
suche rule happen betweene you.

I am contented you shall debate what you will (q Ph[illegible]
tus) so it maie be doen with quietnesse, but I will neuer [illegible]
contende with her for the maisterie while I liue, she hath an[illegible]
die wonne it, I am contented she shall weare it.

I praie you then (quoth Alberto) that you wil goe home to your owne house, and I will goe fetche my daughter, and will come vnto you straight waie, and I doubt not but to take suche order betweene you, as shall fall out to bothe your likinges.

I praie God you maie (q Philotus) and I will goe home, and there will staie your commyng.

Alberto likewise went to his owne house, and callyng Emelia, saied neuer a woorde to her, but willed her to followe hym: and commyng to the house of Philotus, whom he founde within, tariyng his commyng. And it fortuned at thesame instante, Philerno and Brisilla, bothe were gone into the Toune to buye certaine thynges, that thei had neede of. And Alberto beginnyng first to rebuke his Daughter, that would seme in suche maner to abuse her housebande, and with a long discourse he preached vnto her, with what duetie and obedience, women ought to vse their housebandes withall, and not to take vpon them like Maisters, to correcte and chastice theim. Emelia denaied not onelie the facte, but also she denaied Philotus to be her housebande.

What haue wee here to dooe (quoth the Father) how canst thou (shameleste queane) denaie that, whiche within these fower daies was performed, in the face of the whole worlde?

Emelia standyng stiffe to her tackelyng: would in nowise confesse that euer she was Married.

Then her Father beganne to charge her with her owne woordes, whiche he had vsed to her before, how she had disguised her self in mannes apparell, and so stolne awaie forthe of dooores, the which Emelia neuer denaied. Why then (quoth her father) did not I meete thee in the streate, and at the requeste of thy housebande here presente, did forgiue thee thy faulte, to

...gen deliuered thee, and with whom thou haste euer ...e remained.

...elia made flat deniall of any of all these saiynges to bee ... Alberto in a greate furie, would haue taken witnesse of ...ilotus in the matter, but Philotus fearyng an other banket ...t night, when he should goe to bedde, durste not in any wise ...eme to contrarie Emelia: In the ende after greate fendyng and prouyng had in the matter, Emelia from poinct to poincte discoursed to her Father, how she firste fell into the likyng of Flanius, and by his practise, so conueighed her self awaie in his Pages apparell, and had with hym remained all this while, till now he had tourned her awaie.

Her father would in nowise allowe this tale to be true, but Flanius beeyng well knowne to bee a courteous Gentleman, Alberto deuised to sende for hym, who presently at his gentle intreatie, came to the house of Philotus, where he spared not to confesse a truth, that onely for the loue that he bare to Emelia, he deuised to steale her awaie: and there came one vnto him in the likenesse of Emelia, and in thesame apparell that he had prouided for her, whom he verie charely kept, vntill suche tyme as he sawe with his owne eyes, that Emelia was Married in the Churche to Philotus, and then assuryng hym self, that he had been deceiued by some Spirite, that had taken vpon the similitude and likenesse of Emelia, he presently came home, and tourned her awaie, and what was become of her, he could neuer learne.

Alberto muche amazed to heare this tale, saied: Seignior Flanius doe you knowe your Emelia again, if you see her, and then poinetyng to his daughter, he saied: Is not this thesame Emelia that you speake of, whiche you haue tourned awaie.

I knowe not (q Flanius) the one from the other, but sure I sawe with myne eyes twoo Emelias so like, that the one of thē of force must needes bee the Deuill.

There is no question (q Philotus) but that is my wife, if there bee euer a Deuill of them bothe, I knowe it is she: But alas that euer I was borne, what shall I now doe, I knowe I haue Married the Deuill.

And

And by fortune as Alberto chaunce[illegible] windowe, he espied Philerno and Brisilla in th[illegible] myng homewardes: Peace (q Alberto) here c[illegible] ther Emelia, wee shall now trie, whiche of them is [illegible] (I thinke) before we departe.

By this Philerno was come in, and hearyng how matters had been debated, and were falne out: againe, knowing Alberto to be his Father, and what preiudice his sister Emelia was like to sustaine, if she should be forsaken by her freende and louer Flanius, confessed the whole matter, humblie desiryng his Father to forgiue hym.

When he had a while wondered at the circumstaunce, and the truthe of euery thyng laied open, and come to light, all parties were well pleased and contented, sauyng Philotus, for when he remembred, first the losse of his loue Emelia, then how Philerno had beaten hym, what a bedfellowe he had prouided hym, while he hym self went and laie with his Daughter: these thinges put all together, made hym in suche a chafe, that he was like to runne out of his wittes: But when he had regarded a good while, and sawe how little helpe it did preuaile hym, he was contented in the ende, that his Daughter Brisilla, should Marrie with Philerno, and Flanius verie ioyfully receiued againe his Emelia (when he knewe she was no Deuill) and bothe the Marriages consummate in one daie. And so I praie God giue them ioye, and euery old dotarde so good successe as had Philotus.

FINIS.